

BASIC COMBAT UNIT OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

JURE HIMELRAJH, MAJOR, SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES
B.S., United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, 2006

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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Name of Candidate: Major Jure Himelrajh

Thesis Title: Basic Combat Unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
William T. Pugh, MPA

_____, Member
Kenneth Long, D.M.

_____, Member
James C. Cricks, MPA

Accepted this 9th day of June 2017 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Prisco R. Hernandez, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

BASIC COMBAT UNIT OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES, by Major Jure Himelrajh, 100 pages.

Because of the prolonged financial crisis, Slovenian defense sector had lost a third of its annual budget from 2010-17. According to the 2017 Annual Readiness Report to the President, the Slovenian Armed Forces are at its lowest point. Immediate changes are necessary in order to reverse the trend.

This research offers a review of relevant Slovenian strategic documents, a combined arms concept and the last major U.S. Army transformation that saw the organization transition from a division to a brigade-centric force. The goal of the research is to establish what the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed forces should be. Findings, with other recommendations, should be the foundation for the upcoming transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

The research found that the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces should be a light infantry company with organic combat support enablers. With an organization based on the presented basic combat unit, Slovenian Armed Forces would be more efficient in accomplishing missions and tasks prescribed by the strategic documents.

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I dedicate this study to the competent officers of the Slovenian Armed Forces that will shape the Slovenian military in the future.

SAPERE AUDE!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ACRONYMS.....	viii
ILLUSTRATIONS	ix
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
Introduction.....	1
Current Situation.....	4
Purpose and Significance of the Study	7
Primary and Secondary Research Questions	8
Assumptions.....	9
Limitations	10
Scope and Delimitations	11
R1: Initial Personal Recommendation	12
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	15
Introduction.....	15
Transformation of the U.S. Army (1991-2005).....	17
Brigade Combat Teams	24
Combined Arms.....	29
General Overview of Relevant Slovenian Literature.....	33
Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia.....	40
Defense Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia	42
Resolution on General Long-Term Development and Equipping Program of the Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025.....	46
Mid-term Defense Program of the Republic of Slovenia 2016-2020	51
Military Doctrine	53
Chapter Summary	55
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	58
Purpose of the Research and the Research Questions	58
Research Methodology	60

Chapter Summary	63
CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS	64
Introduction.....	64
What aspects of the process of transformation of the U.S. Army from a division to a brigade-centric force are applicable to the Slovenian Armed Forces?	65
What kind of combined arms capabilities must a basic combat unit have?	66
What is the framework prescribed by the Slovenian strategic documents for determining the basic combat unit?	68
Application of the Research Model	71
R2: Informed Position.....	78
Chapter Summary and Conclusions.....	79
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	81
R3: Recommended Solution	81
Recommendations for the Chief Decision Maker.....	83
Recommendations for Further Study	85
Personal Learning Reflections	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88

ACRONYMS

ABCT	Armored Brigade Combat Team
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
CBA	Capability Based Assessment
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear
CDM	Chief Decision Maker
DOTMLPF-P	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, Facilities, Policy
EU	European Union
FM	Field Manual
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HQ	Headquarters
IBCT	Infantry Brigade Combat Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
R1	Initial Personal Recommendation
R2	Informed Position
R3	Recommended Solution
SAF	Slovenian Armed Forces
SBCT	Stryker Brigade Combat Team
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
UAS	Unmanned Aerial System
U.S.	United States

ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Figure 1. R1: Initial Personal Recommendation	14
Figure 2. Brigade Size Modular Operations.....	24
Figure 3. Armored Brigade Combat Team.....	25
Figure 4. Infantry Brigade Combat Team	27
Figure 5. Stryker Brigade Combat Team	28
Figure 6. Military Doctrine Input Documents	34
Figure 7. Defense Budget from 2000 to 2020	36
Figure 8. Slovenia's Interest in the Area of Defense	43
Figure 9. Slovenia's Defense Objectives	44
Figure 10. Missions and Main Tasks of the Slovenian Armed Forces.....	47
Figure 11. Long Term Goals of the Slovenian Armed Forces	48
Figure 12. Mission, Mission Essential and Other Tasks	53
Figure 13. Approach to the Conduct of the Research	62
Figure 14. Research Model	63
Figure 15. Slovenia's Interest in the Area of Defense, Modified.....	72
Figure 16. R1 and the Slovenia's Defense Objectives, Modified	73
Figure 17. R1 and Missions and Main Tasks of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Modified.....	75
Figure 18. R2: Informed Position.....	79

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

The Republic of Slovenia lies at the intersection of Central, East, and South Europe. It offers the shortest routes between Western and Central Europe to the Balkans and further on to Asia; from Central Europe to the Adriatic, and on to the Mediterranean; and from Eastern and Southeastern Europe to the Apennine Peninsula. This distinctive geopolitical and geostrategic location offers ample economic advantages as it connects the more prosperous Central and Western Europe to the developing countries of Eastern Europe. Furthermore, it gives Central European countries fast access to the African and Asian continents through the Port of Koper. Regardless of its unique geostrategic position and with it a potential for security concerns, the *Global Peace Index Report* for 2016 states that Slovenia is one of the safest countries in the world.¹

Upon separation from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991, Slovenia enjoyed great international success and rapid economic development that culminated with its entrance into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on March 29, 2004 and the European Union (EU) on May 1, 2004. During the first 15 years of its independence, Slovenia had successfully overcome the significant loss of Yugoslav economic market and transitioned from an industry based to a service based economy. On

¹ Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Peace Index Report* (Sydney: EIP, June 2016), 8, accessed November 6, 2016, <http://economicsandpeace.org/reports>.

the surface, it was by far the most successful transition of any former Yugoslav Republic. Slovenia was a modern, democratic, western oriented country.

In line with that, the early 1990's saw the transformation of the Slovenian Territorial Defense Forces into the Slovenian Armed Forces. Slovenian Territorial Defense Forces were established in 1968 to strengthen the Yugoslav National Army after the hostile acts of Warsaw Pact members against Czechoslovakia.² The Territorial Defense Forces performed a crucial role against the Yugoslav aggression in the War for Independence in 1991. In 1994, the Parliament passed a new *Defense Act* and with it renamed the Territorial Defense Forces to the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF). Based on a clear goal of Euro-Atlantic integration, the SAF saw rapid progress with accession to NATO in 2004. At its peak, SAF deployed a battalion task force to Kosovo as a part of the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) in 2007. Upon separation from Yugoslavia until accession to NATO, the politicians clearly supported the Territorial Defense Forces and later SAF. After Slovenia joined NATO, political support began to decline, and it diminished once the financial crisis and recession began in 2009, resulting in major defense budget cuts.³

The departure of many military professionals with the expulsion of the Yugoslav People's Army left a vast gap in military knowledge and experience. The majority of

² Albin Mikulič, *Defending Democratic Slovenia 1991* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Ministry of Defence, Slovenian Armed Forces, Military Museum, 2006), 70.

³ Igor Kotnik, "Odnos do Slovenske vojske po 25 letih: Razlika med politiki in državniki (Relations towards the Slovenian Armed Forces 25 Years Later: Discinction between Statesmen and Politicians)," *Dnevnik*, May 21, 2016, accessed February 9, 2017, <https://dnevnik.si/1042736020>.

officers in the Territorial Defense Forces came from the Reserve Corps and, no matter the rank, had only received basic military officer training. In addition, until about 1996, there was little emphasis on professional military development, and some who were junior officers at that time now hold senior military positions. To bridge that knowledge gap, Slovenia first turned to Switzerland and Austria, and then to Germany for military education. The year 1994 signaled a shift in educational efforts towards the United States with Slovenia joining Partnership for Peace and signing a bilateral agreement with the Colorado National Guard as part of the Department of Defense State Partnership Program. Perhaps the most significant outside influence on the SAF has been military education through the International Military Education and Training Program, with its first participants beginning training in 1993. While that contributed to increased expertise among individuals, it also created lasting issues. First, the U.S. military apparatus is a system that cannot be replicated anywhere in the world, let alone in a small country like Slovenia. Indiscriminate copying of predominately Army doctrine led down a path resulting in the SAF unable to establish its own identity. Second, there are significant divisions in the mindsets of officers that had limited exposure to formal military education in 1990's, those that have been educated in the SAF Military Education System and those who have attended military schools abroad. Finally, instead of capitalizing on the knowledge and expertise gained abroad, most knowledge was dispersed among tactical units.

With all-volunteer armed forces, membership in NATO and the EU, and a successful deployment of a battalion task force to Kosovo (KFOR), the future seemed bright for the SAF in 2007. Plans were made, in addition to the existing motorized

infantry battalion battle group, to develop a medium infantry battalion battle group by 2020.⁴ However, all was brought to a permanent halt as the global recession took hold in Slovenia beginning in 2009.

Current Situation

In subsequent years, the defense sector has lost a third of its budget, going from \$583 million in 2010 (1.61 percent of GDP) to a projected \$374 million (0.91 percent of GDP) in 2017.⁵ By far the largest cut in the public sector.⁶

There are three main reasons why:

1. After Slovenia joined NATO, political support for the armed forces began to decline. Image presented to the public was that the Common Defense principle and Article 5 of the Washington Treaty are guarantees for security. Support further diminished once the financial crisis and recession began in 2009, resulting in major defense budget cuts.
2. According to the *Global Peace Index Report*, Slovenia is one of the safest countries in the world with no obvious outside threats.⁷ With the exception of

⁴ Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, *Resolution on General Long-Term Development and Equipping Programme of the Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, 2011), 18.

⁵ Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, *Srednjeročni obrambni program Republike Slovenije 2016-2020* (Mid-term Defense Program of the Republic of Slovenia) (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, February 2016), 43.

⁶ Slovenian Armed Forces are part of a larger Public Administration apparatus. By law, rules that apply to clerks, for the most part, also apply to members of the armed forces.

⁷ Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Peace Index Report*, 8.

the recent migrant crisis, Slovenia has not had a significant security related event since 1991. For these reasons, there is a false perception of security and a belief that Slovenia does not need a strong defense apparatus. Even the *Resolution on the National Security of the Republic of Slovenia*, published in 2010, states that in the short and mid-term, Slovenia is not directly exposed to military threats.⁸ Overall, people fail to recognize that Slovenia's strategic position requires a strong and stable military.

3. With the abolishment of conscription in 2003, the military has slowly but surely lost touch with the general population. In 1994, the strength of the armed forces was about 3,000 professional members of the Territorial Defense Forces, 5000 conscripts and 54,000 active reserve troops, altogether about 62,000 personnel.⁹ Therefore, mostly because of conscription, a significant portion of the population was directly linked to the military personnel. In 2016, with an all-volunteer military, there are 7760 active and reserve personnel in the military.¹⁰ Because of the abolishment of the conscription and transition to an all-volunteer force, only a fraction of the population is directly linked to the

⁸ Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, *Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, 2010), 20.

⁹ Zvezdan Marković, "20 let ponosni nase in v ponos Sloveniji (20 Years of Being Proud of Ourselves and Making Slovenia Proud)," *Slovenska vojska*, 2011, accessed November 6, 2016, http://www.slovenskavojska.si/fileadmin/slovenska_vojska/pdf/sporocila/20let_zgod.pdf.

¹⁰ Information gathered from the official website of the Slovenian Armed Forces, number of personnel varies and is updated monthly, accessed April 18, 2017, <http://www.slovenskavojska.si/o-slovenski-vojski>.

military. Furthermore, the perception of some politicians and bureaucrats is that the SAF is in NATO and not Slovenia.¹¹

All aforementioned reasons contribute to a public opinion that the military is not an essential pillar of the state; therefore, allowing politicians to cut the military budget without any real opposition. The last three Annual Reports on the Readiness of the Slovenian Armed Forces to the Commander in Chief, President Pahor, showed that the SAF is no longer capable of carrying out most of its assigned missions.¹² While there was some public discussion, no comprehensive remedial action was taken.

In order to adjust to the new financial reality, a major transformation of the SAF was planned in 2012 and partially executed in 2013-14. The transformation was expected to be a long-term project concluding in 2018. However, it came to a halt in 2014 with the change in the leadership of the SAF. The military in its current state is incapable of carrying out its missions assigned by law and its commitments to NATO.¹³ Various statements made by the President, the Committee on Defense, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff Major General Alan Geder and scholars, call for a comprehensive reform of the defense system which will include a transformation of the SAF.¹⁴ However, a new

¹¹ Kotnik, "Odnos do Slovenske vojske po 25 letih."

¹² Dejan Karba, "Ob poraznem uradnem poročilu o Slovenski vojski piloti ostali še brez našitkov na uniformah (With a Dismisal Report on the Readiness of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Pilots Stripped of Their Patches)," *Dnevnik*, accessed March 11, 2017, <https://www.dnevnik.si/1042765358>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Kotnik, "Odnos do Slovenske vojske," and Urška Makovec, "Varnostno stanje zaostreno, Slovenska vojska pa nima niti za naboje (While the security situation worsens, the Slovenian Army Cannot Afford to Buy Ammunition)," *SiolNET*, March 10, 2016,

analysis of the current state of affairs must first be conducted, followed by a revision of requirements and an alignment with its capabilities. Finally, the proposed solution has to be evaluated through the lens of resources available.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

It is a firm belief among most field grade officers in SAF that the state of the armed forces is at least worrying. Numerous publications along with statements by the strategic leadership including the President of Slovenia attest to that.¹⁵ There is a concerning divide between the strategic and tactical levels as well as force management in Slovenia. Furthermore, a traditional and ideological divide exists between the General Staff of the SAF and the Ministry of Defense. The main issues that the SAF are currently facing are: a severe lack of resources, a negative organizational culture and an outdated and misaligned doctrine. In addition, there is a need for an institution that would develop professionalism, expertise and identity of the SAF, eventually making the armed forces a profession. Slovenia has committed to provide two Battalion Battle Groups (Bn BGs) to NATO pool of forces. However, it can currently only provide one.¹⁶ During the last transformation in 2013-14, light infantry regiments were formed and combat support battalions were transformed into companies and assigned to brigades. In accordance with the Resolution on General Long-Term Development and Equipping Program of the

accessed November 10, 2016, <http://siol.net/novice/slovenija/varnostno-stanje-zaostreno-slovenska-vojska-pa-nima-niti-za-naboje-406879>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Republic of Slovenia, *Mid-term Defense Program*, 7.

Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025, the basic component of capabilities “designed for operations and accomplishment of specific tasks” are companies.¹⁷ With the ever-changing operational environment and constant budget cuts, a thorough capabilities based analysis is needed. The product of that analysis should be an organizational structure with the requisite capabilities of the basic combat unit of the SAF and how that unit is integrated into the armed forces. This research, when considered by the top strategic leadership, should serve as a starting point for the future transformation of the SAF.

Primary and Secondary Research Questions

The expectation of this study is that the fundamentals of the process of transition of the U.S. Army from a division-centric to a brigade-centric force in the early 2000’s can be applied to the future transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces. However, the process must be applied with the utmost respect to the realities of the contemporary Slovenian environment, not just translated and applied, as it occurred in the past. As the process of the last major transformation of the U.S. Army yielded the brigade as the basic combat unit, so should this research result in a recommendation on what should be the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces. The purpose of the study is not to define the framework of the U.S. Army transformation but to study the inputs and the process that led to the output, which was the creation of the Brigade Combat Teams.

Therefore, the primary research question is:

What should be the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces?

To determine the answer, a set of secondary research questions must be answered:

¹⁷ Republic of Slovenia, *Long-Term Development and Equipping*, 30.

1. What was the process of the U.S. Army's transition from a division-centric to a brigade-centric force?
2. What kind of combined arms capabilities must the basic combat unit have?
3. What is the framework prescribed by the Slovenian strategic documents for determining the basic combat unit?

The first secondary question will be answered through extensive literature review of the last major transformation of the U.S. Army, which began as the Cold War ended and concluded with the establishment of the Brigade Combat Teams. The second secondary question will be answered through study of literature on combined arms and a follow-on analysis. The third secondary question will be answered through extensive study of the Slovenian national strategic documents and doctrine as well as commitments made to international organizations (NATO, EU).

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made during the course of this research:

1. A process of determining a basic combat unit can be derived through a study of the last major transformation of the U.S. Army.
2. There are concepts of the last major transformation of the U.S. Army that can be applied to the future transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces.
3. Combined Arms framework is universal throughout the militaries and its basic definition applies to all.
4. The Slovenian Armed Forces will not be deployed to major combat operations in the foreseeable future. Since 1997, contingents of SAF have only deployed to crisis areas to conduct stability operations. This assumption is supported by

the fact that, according to national caveats, deployed SAF units are prohibited from participating in combat operations.

Limitations

One of the most significant limitations is a severe lack of available literature, especially with regards to the Slovenian Armed Forces. The U.S. military with its immense resources, interdependence with other elements of combat power, numerous research institutes and vast international involvement is not the preferred case study; however, it is the only attainable one.

Another limitation is the classification of material that pertains to readiness, status of materiel, and the SAF's commitments to international organizations (NATO, EU). Furthermore, most Slovenian strategic documents are outdated. The *Military Doctrine* was written in 2006, the *Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* in 2010, the *Defense Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* in 2013, etc. None of these documents adequately capture the changes in the operational environment, neither do they sufficiently address the effect of budget cuts.

The next limitation is the vast difference between the U.S. Army and the Slovenian Armed Forces, not only in size and resources, but in organization and capabilities as well. The largest unit in the SAF is a brigade-size unit. Maritime and air force components are not considered services but rather branches of the armed forces; therefore, the SAF cannot conduct joint operations as defined by U.S. Army doctrine.

The last limitation is set by the *Resolution on General Long-Term Development and Equipping*: "The highest unit tasked with joint operations within the framework of national defense will be a brigade-level task force, whereas the highest unit dedicated for

operations outside the national territory will be a task force infantry battalion battle group”.¹⁸

Scope and Delimitations

The research does not intend to recapture the entire transition of U.S. Army from a division-centric to a brigade-centric force but rather to analyze studies and reports that lead up to the transformation and the decision to designate a brigade as the U.S. Army basic combat unit. Furthermore, it is not the intent of the study to suggest a change of the entire organization of the SAF but a specific formation of the SAF’s basic combat unit and its integration into domestic and international frameworks.

According to the *National Security Strategy*, the fundamental mission of the Slovenian military is to ensure integrity of the country’s borders and national territory, including the connection of Slovenia’s territorial waters to the international waters.¹⁹ The research does not deal with Slovenia’s maritime issues regarding the border dispute with the Republic of Croatia and therefore, omits any connection between a basic combat unit and the provisions of the *National Security Strategy* regarding the integrity of Slovenia’s access to the open sea.

The methodology used will be based upon the DOTMLPF-P (doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities and policy) construct. A capabilities based assessment will be only evaluated across the D-O-M elements. Because

¹⁸ Republic of Slovenia, *Long-Term Development and Equipping*, 30.

¹⁹ Republic of Slovenia, *National Security Strategy*, 4.

these are the most important drivers of top-line requirements in the judgement of the force management professionals.²⁰

Slovenian and NATO official documents are written using British English. For the purpose of clarity, American English is used throughout the thesis except when citing Slovenian publications. The most common term used – defense, is therefore written as such and not “defence” as it is used throughout Slovenian and NATO literature.

R1: Initial Personal Recommendation

This thesis is an applied professional case study research. The research methodology is explained in chapter 3. This section provides the Initial Personal Recommendation (R1) of the basic combat unit of the SAF as described by the author. The author applied reasonable professional judgement to the existing professional body of knowledge to design R1. The author’s experience and knowledge is based on his education at the United States Military Academy, successful completion of various tactical level courses, command at the platoon and company level, deployments to Afghanistan and Kosovo, completion of the Maneuver Captains Career Course, planning and execution of various training events with U.S. Army units in Europe (including combined arms live fire exercises), an assignment as an Aide-de Camp to the Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces and various other individual and unit training events. In accordance with the organization and size of the SAF (6899 active

²⁰ Discussion with Kenneth Long, D.M., Command and General Staff College, November 17, 2016.

duty personnel), there are only three options of the basic combat unit's design in terms of size: a company, a battalion or a brigade size organization.²¹

The *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* sets the highest unit to be deployed abroad as the task force infantry battalion battle group.²² That, and the fact that SAF only has two combat brigades, eliminates a brigade size organization as a potential basic combat unit because experience shows that armies need at least three units of a given type to sustain the regular extended deployment of a single type unit.²³ Next, SAF organization is based on infantry regiments with a total of four in the armed forces. The infantry regiments are made up of three light infantry companies and a small headquarters company, without indirect fire support or combat multipliers. They are not capable of conducting combined arms operations or operating independently. If only one regimental headquarters (HQ) becomes combat ineffective, 25% of the total combat force becomes incapable of executing organized operations. Therefore, a company-sized unit is the most appropriate size for the basic combat unit. It offers the most flexibility with at least sixteen independent units. Furthermore, SAF mostly deploys company or smaller units to peace support operations abroad. The author selected an augmented U.S. Army infantry company, prescribed by the Field Manual 3-21.10: *The Infantry Rifle Company*

²¹ According to the official website of the Slovenian Armed Forces, number is accurate as of April 18, 2017, accessed April 18, 2017, <http://www.slovenskavojska.si/o-slovenski-vojski>.

²² Republic of Slovenia, *Long-Term Development and Equipping*, 30.

²³ Discussion with Kenneth Long, D.M., Command and General Staff College, November 17, 2016.

as the R1: Initial Personal Recommendation.²⁴ This organization was selected for its simplicity and because it requires the least amount of resources when compared to other organizations. In addition, most militaries are very similar at the tactical level, whereas they differ significantly at the operational and strategic levels of war.

The author augmented the basic infantry rifle company design with a sustainment, engineer, unmanned aerial system and sniper elements. All with a purpose of establishing a unit capable of independent employment.

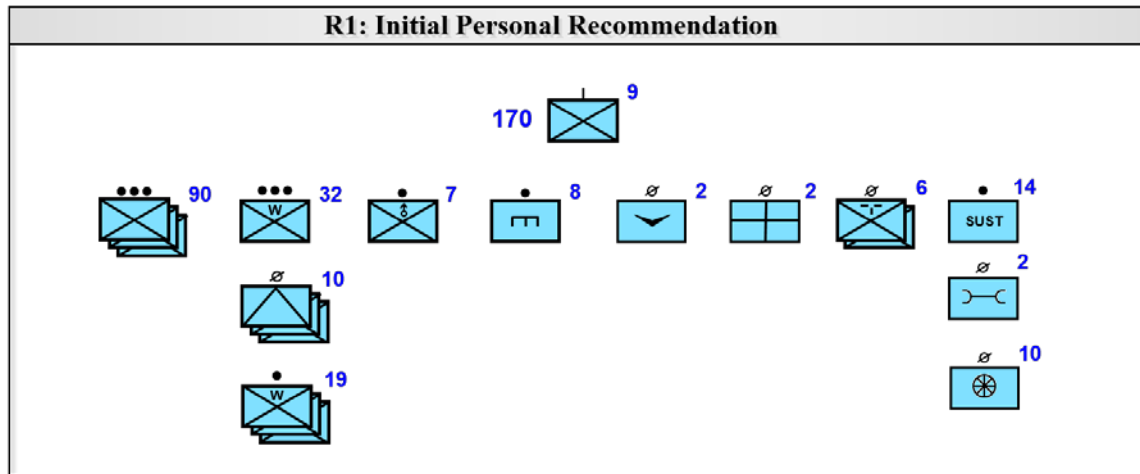


Figure 1. R1: Initial Personal Recommendation

Source: Created by author.

²⁴ Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-21.10: *The Infantry Rifle Company* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, July 2006), 1-11.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Even though, the phrase “basic combat unit” seems a part of common military vocabulary, there are no scholarly sources available that would adequately explain its meaning. The phrase itself is very rarely mentioned in scholarly military literature and is not defined in the Department of Defense Dictionary or any of the U.S. Army doctrinal sources, neither in NATO Definition of Terms.²⁵ The term “Unit of Action” (UA) coined during the last major U.S. Army transformation, is the closest description of the concept associated with the basic combat unit. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-903 defines the UA as the smallest combined arms unit that can be committed independently.²⁶ This study adopts the definition, therefore, a basic combat unit must have a composition of combined arms and be capable of independent employment. Additional requirements will be presented with the analysis of the brigade-centric force transition process.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the last major U.S. Army transformation, the period of 1991-2005. Because one of the outcomes of every transformation is a confirmation of the standing design or development of a new design potentially featuring

²⁵ NATO Headquarters, NATO Standardization Office, *AAP-06: NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions* (Brussels, Belgium: NATO Headquarters. NATO Standardization Office, December 2016).

²⁶ U.S. Army. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-90: *The United States Army Objective Force Operational and Organizational Plan for Maneuver Unit of Action* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S Army, TRADOC, July 2002), 25.

a new basic combat unit, the process of military transformation should be defined. That is beyond the scope of this study, since according to the *Strategic Studies Institute Report on Security Transformation* published in 2003:

Transformation is treated as a process rather than an end. . . . Because it is a process, there is an absence of a coherent framework for developing and implementing it. No clear definition of what is and what is not transformation exists. Accordingly, no metrics have been adopted, and hence there is no way to establish a schedule for accomplishing set milestones.²⁷

Therefore, it is not the purpose of this study to define the framework of a military transformation but rather to understand the process, or as Jeffery Clarke writes in the foreword section of *Transforming an Army at War*:

An understanding of the Army organizational transformation process; the hard choices that had to be made in balancing tactical and operational capabilities; and the relationship of those organizational changes to developments in the areas of military doctrine, training and education, and the acquisition of advanced weapons, communications, and transportation systems.²⁸

Furthermore, the study will examine the inputs that feed into the transformation process and the outputs produced. Those can then, with professional sense, be applied to the future transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

The second part of this chapter will focus on a concept of combined arms to answer the following questions: What is the definition of combined arms according to Army doctrine, NATO doctrine and SAF doctrine? Does a military need different

²⁷ John P. White and John Deutch, *Security Transformation: Report on the Belfer Center Conference on Military Transformation* (Washington, DC: Strategic Studies Institute, March 2003), 16.

²⁸ Donnelly, William M., *Transforming an Army at War: Designing the Modular Force, 1991 – 2005* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army, Center of Military History, 2007), v.

combined arms unit for different situations or does “one size fits all” exist? What is the relationship between combined arms and a basic combat unit?

The third part of this chapter will focus on the Slovenian strategic documents as well as the standing military doctrine. It will examine the requirements of the Slovenian Armed Forces in accordance with the provisions of the strategic documents and the functioning of the SAF as prescribed by the military doctrine, both with regards to a basic combat unit.

Transformation of the U.S. Army (1991-2005)

This section focuses on the requirements for the transformed U.S. Army, as they were set forth by the national strategic documents, the contemporary operational environment and top leadership. Furthermore, it seeks to find potential requirements for the future transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in accordance with the Slovenian national interests prescribed by the strategic documents.

Some might argue, that a brigade as a basic combat unit was the desired end state of the transformation. Evidence that this was not true is provided by Pamphlet 525-5 on *Force XXI Operation* (1994), which suggests that the division would remain the Army’s main tactical formation.²⁹ Therefore, the envisioned end state of the transformation process was not a unit, but rather a capability that would satisfy all requirements.

²⁹ U.S. Army, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5: *Force XXI Operations* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army TRADOC, August 1994), 4-5.

A Historical Trend Analysis by the Combat Studies Institute, analyzes all major reorganizations, as transformation were previously called, from 1955 to 1997. The study roughly groups the objectives of those transformations as:

1. Reorganization to meet a certain threat.
2. Reorganization to utilize or accommodate new technology.
3. Reorganization to accommodate austerity in one or more areas.³⁰

The following recommendations were derived from the study:

1. Have a clear and valid reason, based upon doctrine and battlefield realities, for reorganizing.
2. Give an explicit sense of direction to the testing agency and to the Army at large, so that the goal of reorganization is commonly understood.
3. Set specific concrete goals for the testing agencies and assure that the evaluation process is a valid test of the reorganization concept, not a rubber stamp.³¹

The study was performed in 1999 and some of the concepts might be outdated; however, it clearly states that a transformation must occur for specific reasons and must be based on the realities and context of the current operational environment. Today, that in itself presents a challenge because of the rapid changes in the operational environment and expansion of transnational and non-state threats.

³⁰ Combat Studies Institute, CSI Report No. 14: *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat: A Historical Trend Analysis* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: USA CGSC CSI, December 1999), 40.

³¹ Ibid, 43.

The idea of a Brigade Combat Team came about with General Dennis J. Reimer as the Army Chief of Staff. He augmented General Sullivan's "Force XXI" with the "Army After Next program" in 1996.³² Force XXI was an effort centered on a hybrid heavy division design, focusing on integrating immature "Tactical Internet" (digital technology) into combat training operations.³³ In Division XXI, maneuver units (brigades) were able to operate at greater separation because they were equipped with systems that allowed them to see each other virtually. In addition, "modifications included increased fire support to shape battle space, expanded reconnaissance and intelligence capabilities, greater consolidation of logistics support functions, and additional infantry."³⁴ The experiments with the Force XXI resulted in the Army's changed perception of digitization of the force.³⁵ The Army After Next Program had the task of defining future conflicts and wars and identifying critical issues important to the U.S. Army. The conclusion of the series of war games and experimentation was a call for a middleweight force that could "arrive at a crisis early, with sufficient combat power to deliver a critical blow to an adversary's operation."³⁶ The unit would have to be tailorable in order to respond to different types of crises and would have to possess a

³² Donnely, *Transforming an Army at War*, 9.

³³ Combat Studies Institute, *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat*, 56.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 58.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁶ Margaret A Fratzel, *The Army After Next Spring Wargame 1998: Integrated Analysis Report* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: USA TRADOC, 1999), 55.

wide array of capabilities.³⁷ To meet the requirements set forth by General Reimer, Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) developed the concept of a brigade size "strike force" with the intent of bridging the gap between heavy forces without adequate mobility and light forces without adequate firepower. A division at that time had high tactical mobility, low strategic mobility and was logistically burdensome. The new force would be modular in nature, tailored in accordance with the assigned mission by adding necessary specialized units or enablers.³⁸ In September 2003, General Peter Jan Schoomaker, then Chief of Staff of the Army, ordered TRADOC to start the process of converting the U.S. Army from a division-centric to a brigade-centric force. By no means does that mark the start of the last major transformation process, as General Sullivan envisioned a transformation of the Cold-War era army into a modern fighting force as early as 1991.

In September 2003, General Kevin P. Byrnes, the head of TRADOC, organized Task Force Modularity to develop a modular force design. The Task Force, composed of retired senior military officials, was organized in three groups to avoid groupthink mentality. Upon analysis, the Task Force identified five essential tasks, which were vital to successfully complete transformation into a modular force. One of them was a shift from a division-centric to a brigade-centric organization based on heavy and infantry

³⁷ Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 10.

³⁸ Ibid.

units of action.³⁹ Eventually, these two units of action were developed into the Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) and Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT).

The transformation of the division-centric to a brigade-centric force began with an extensive analysis of previous transformations. That yielded various studies and reports by prominent organizations, including the Strategic Studies Institute, the Combat Studies Institute, The Institute for Land Warfare, RAND and others. The following requirements for the unit that would be an outcome of the transformation, were common to all:

1. Ability to deploy anywhere in the world within 96 hours and immediately begin conducting full spectrum operations.
2. Be self-sustainable for a defined period of time.
3. Independently conduct combined arms operations.
4. Be at least as lethal as a division but more mobile and agile.
5. Must incorporate latest technological advances.
6. Must be modular in nature; therefore, interchangeable and tailorable.
7. Better suitable for operations in a joint environment.
8. Increase the number of deployable units.

There were two additional requirements set forth by General Schoomaker:

1. Using existing troops and materiel without augmenting them.
2. Must be duplicable without increase in overall manpower.⁴⁰

³⁹ Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 34.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 25.

Both of General Schoomaker's criteria were eventually omitted, with the introduction of the new Interim Brigade Team at an estimated cost of \$1 billion each and the expansion of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which required additional manpower.⁴¹ The Interim Brigade Team would eventually become the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT).

In addition to the requirements above, geopolitical developments and changes in the operational environment called for fundamental changes in the organization of the U.S. Army. Business as usual would no longer suffice.

The concept of modularity is constant throughout the studied literature and is given more or less importance in the process of transformation. According to Linick's *A Critical Evaluation of Modularity* research project, modularity is the most important component of the Army's transformation process.⁴² The same author explains the concept of modularity with the following analogy:

Divisions represent \$100 bills in an era where making change is difficult and where most costs incurred are in the \$20 price range. "So if we have a \$60 fight, we can put three \$20 bills together, but if we have an \$18 or \$20 fight, we have a unit that's capable of a better integration (with other forces) and a higher level of operation."⁴³

⁴¹ General Accounting Office, *Military Transformation: Army Actions Needed to Enhance Formation of Future Interim Brigade Combat Teams* (Washington, DC: GAO, May 2002), 1.

⁴² Linick, Michael E., *A Critical Evaluation of Modularity*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 2006), 3.

⁴³ In his work, Linick quotes General Peter J. Schoomaker in an interview with Cynthia Bauer: *Top Soldier Talks Transformation*, Armed Forces News, February 28, 2003.

The analogy only partially satisfies the basic combat unit requirement in regards to the transition to Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). Since there are three types of Brigade Combat Teams, there should be three different \$20 bills. It has to be noted, that the U.S. Army did significantly reduce the number of types of combat brigades from seventeen to three.⁴⁴ In addition, after the transformation, the division level command was redesigned to where it has the capability and capacity to command any or all three types of BCTs.

The modularity was accompanied by the U.S. Army's efforts to rebalance the force.⁴⁵ Transition from a division-centric to a brigade-centric force enabled the U.S. Army to replace the tiered readiness with a rotational readiness model in 2006.⁴⁶ The purpose of the model, known as Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN), was to improve long-range strategic planning and support battle-focused training. In this model, units flow through three stages of readiness: Reset Phase – Train-Ready Phase – Available Phase.⁴⁷ With transition to BCT's, the U.S. Army was able to successfully implement the ARFORGEN model and bring much needed stability to the force.

⁴⁴ Stuart Johnson, John E. Peters, Karin E. Kitchens, Aaron L. Martin, and Jordan R. Fischbach, *A Review of the Army's Modular Force Structure* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2012), accessed on November 4, 2016, https://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR927-2.html, iii.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Department of the Army, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2009* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, May 2009), 14-16.

Brigade Combat Teams

As explained above, the basic combat unit of the U.S. Army is a brigade combat team. To account for engagement across the entire spectrum of conflict, there are three different types of brigade combat teams. In addition, there are five types of Multifunctional Support Brigades and a number of Additional Functional Brigades. A brigade combat team formation includes one of the combat arms maneuver brigade, combat support units and combat service support units as well as organic indirect fire support. All BCT's include organic military intelligence, artillery, signal, engineer, reconnaissance and sustainment capabilities.

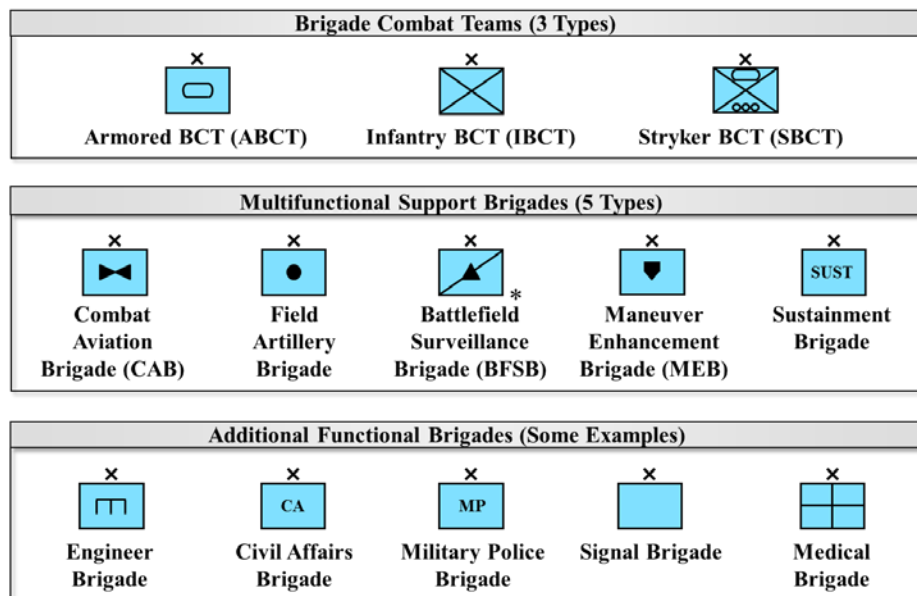


Figure 2. Brigade Size Modular Operations

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-94: *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operation* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, April 2014), 3-1 to 3-12, and 6-3 to 6-12.

The Armored Brigade Combat Team's (ABCT) role is to:

close with the enemy using fire and movement to destroy or capture enemy forces, to repel enemy attacks by fire, to engage in close combat, and to counterattack to control land areas, populations, and resources.⁴⁸

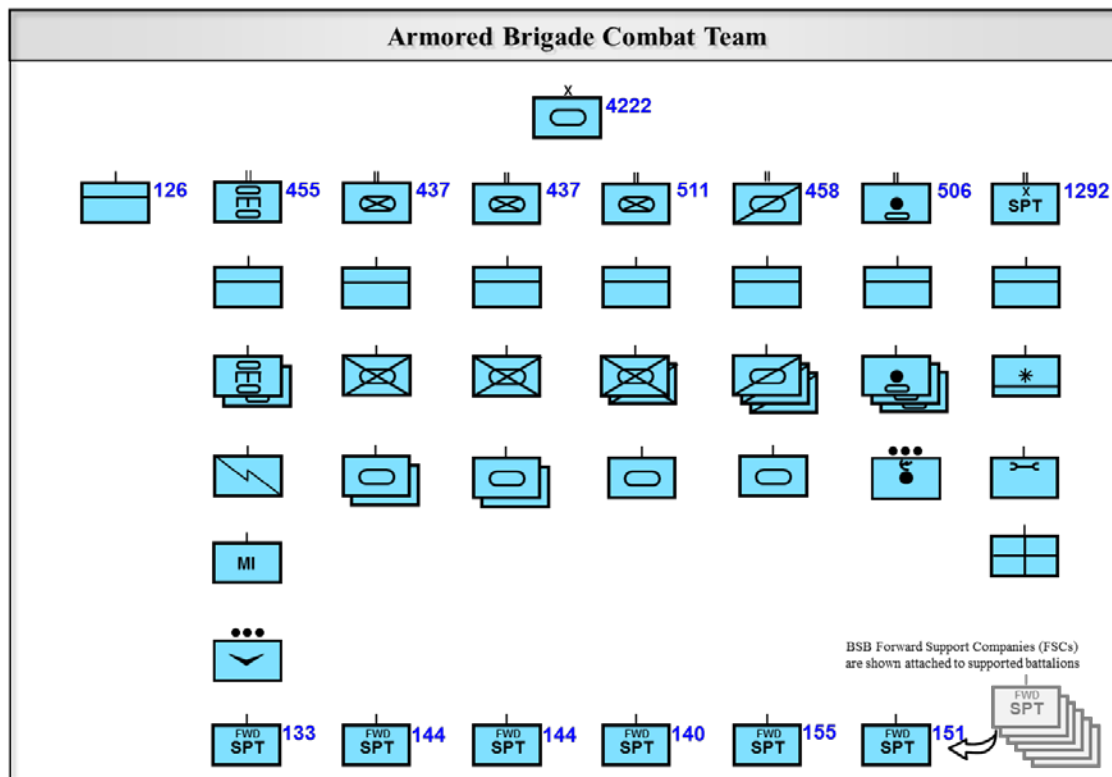


Figure 3. Armored Brigade Combat Team

Source: Maneuver Center of Excellence, *MCoE Supplemental Manual 3-90* (Fort Benning, GA: Organizational Developmental Branch, September 2012), 74.

⁴⁸ Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-96: *Brigade Combat Team*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, October 2015), 1-10.

The main advantages of the ABCT are the mobility, protection, and firepower that enable the ABCT to conduct offensive tasks with great precision and speed.⁴⁹ The main disadvantages are the burdensome logistical footprint with a significant strategic air and sealift required to deploy and sustain the brigade.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the ABCT is not suitable for operations in mountainous and severely restricted terrain.

The Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) is an expeditionary, combined arms formation optimized for dismounted operations in restrictive and severely restrictive terrain. IBCT's role is to "close with the enemy using fire and movement to destroy or capture enemy forces, or to repel enemy attacks by fire, close combat, and counterattack."⁵¹ The main advantages of the IBCT are the ability to operate in all types of terrain, a theater wide operational reach when supported by airlift and less burdensome logistical footprint resulting in less demand for sustainment. In addition, the IBCT can conduct entry operations by ground, air, air assault or amphibious assault into austere areas of operations.⁵² The main disadvantages are lack of organic mobility, firepower and protection assets.

⁴⁹ Department of the Army, FM 3-96: *Brigade Combat Team*, 1-10.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 1-2.

⁵² Ibid.

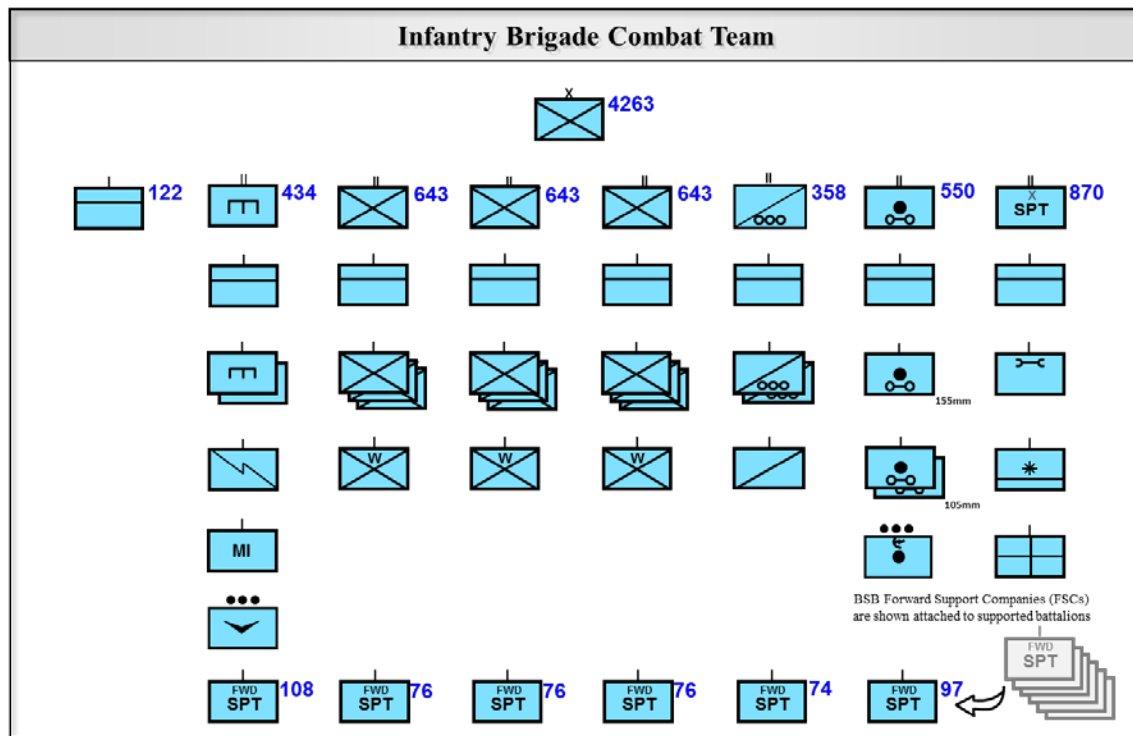


Figure 4. Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Source: Maneuver Center of Excellence, *MCoE Supplemental Manual 3-90* (Fort Benning, GA: Organizational Developmental Branch, September 2012), 12.

The Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) is an expeditionary combined arms formation organized around mounted infantry and designed around the Stryker wheeled armored combat system in several variants.⁵³ SBCT's role is to "close with the enemy using fire and movement to destroy or capture enemy forces, or to repel enemy attacks by fire, close combat, and counterattack to control land areas, populations and resources."⁵⁴

⁵³ Department of the Army, FM 3-96: *Brigade Combat Team*, 1-6.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

The main advantages of the SBCT is the ability to operate effectively in most terrain and weather conditions due to their rapid strategic deployment and mobility.⁵⁵ The SBCT has less firepower and protection than ABCT, yet greater protection than IBCT, and requires more aircraft to deploy than IBCT.

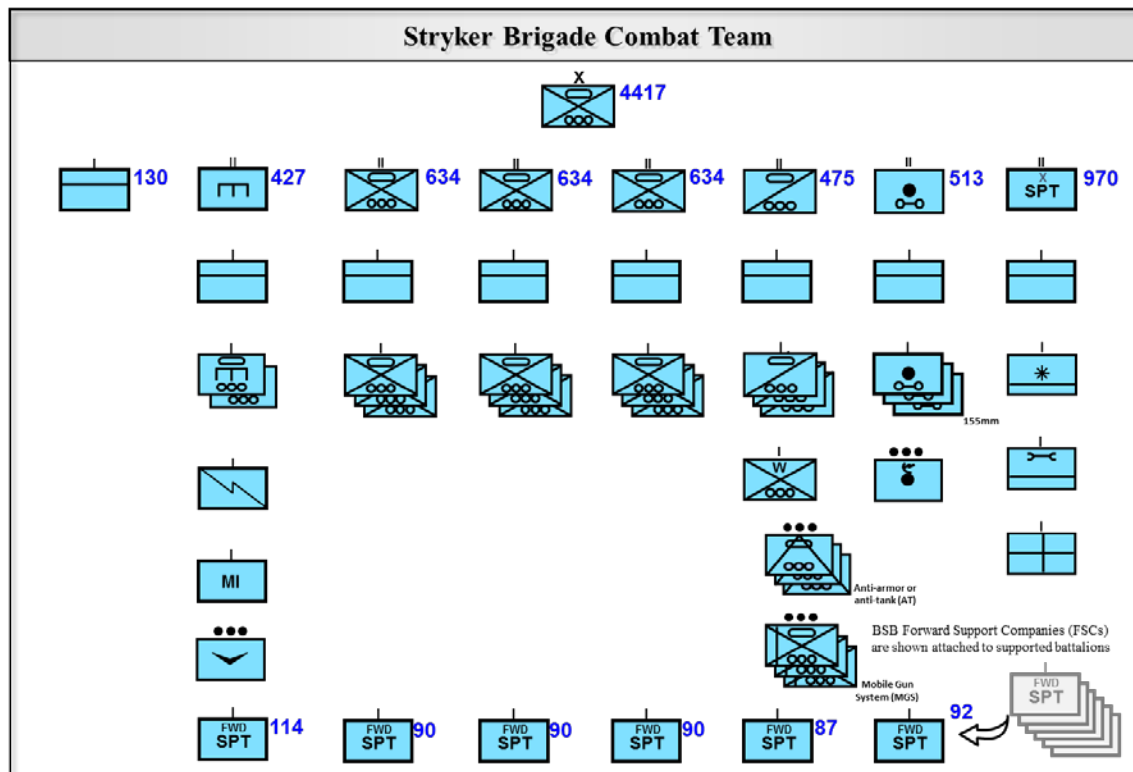


Figure 5. Stryker Brigade Combat Team

Source: Maneuver Center of Excellence, *MCoE Supplemental Manual 3-90* (Fort Benning, GA: Organizational Developmental Branch, September 2012), 144.

⁵⁵ Department of the Army, FM 3-96: *Brigade Combat Team*, 1-6.

Combined Arms

As stated in the Introduction section, a basic combat unit must be capable of independently conducting combined arms warfare. The purpose of this section is to explain the basic concept of combined arms and how they are integrated in the U.S. Army Brigade Combat Teams. The *NATO Standard AAP-06 NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions* offers the following definition of combined arms: “In land operations, relating to the synchronized or simultaneous application of several arms to achieve an effect on the enemy that is greater than if each arm were used against the enemy in sequence.”⁵⁶ By basic definition a “combined arms” concept represents two or more arms or branches working together.

In the past, the most common examples were the employment of infantry, artillery and cavalry as first demonstrated by the Swedish Army led by Gustavus Adolphus at the battle of Breitenfeld in 1631. However, the concept of combined arms reached its maturity almost 300 years later and after four years of fighting in World War I. First the Germans and then the British successfully integrated their combat arms to a level where they were able to break the stalemate on the Western Front and end trench warfare. Firepower gave way to the war of maneuver, which was based upon combined arms. A comprehensive study by Dr. Jonathan M. House *Towards Combined Arms Warfare: A Survey of 20th-Century Tactics, Doctrine, and Organization*, presents three elements that make up combined arms concept:

The combined arms concept is the basic idea that different arms and weapons systems must be used in concert to maximize the survival and combat

⁵⁶ NATO Headquarters, *AAP-06: NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions*, 53.

effectiveness of each other. The strengths of one system must be used to compensate for the weaknesses of others.

Combined arms organization, at whatever level (company, battalion, brigade/regiment, etc.) brings these different arms and weapons together for combat. This may include both fixed, peacetime tables of organization and ad hoc or task-organized combinations of elements in wartime.

Combined arms tactics and operations are the actual roles performed and techniques applied by these different arms and weapons in supporting each other once they have been organized into integrated teams... Moreover, combined arms tactics and techniques at the level of battalion or below are the most difficult aspects about which to generalize historically, because they are most subject to frequent changes in technology.⁵⁷

In addition to practice, refinement and deployment of the combined arms doctrine, the following elements must be considered:

1. Doctrine must lead the acquisition process and must stay current with the advances in technology.
2. Doctrine must be thoroughly understood at all levels of command.
3. The commanders must believe that doctrine can be effective with the resources available (troops, organization, weapons).
4. In the eyes of the commanders, their units must have the training and morale to implement the doctrine.

⁵⁷ Jonathan M. House, *Toward Combined Arms Warfare: A Survey of 20th-Century Tactics, Doctrine, and Organization* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army, CGSC, 1984), 2-3.

5. A combined arms system cannot be implemented without effective command and control to integrate and direct that system.⁵⁸

The combined arms concepts, as defined by the Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADPR) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, published in 2012, is “the synchronized and simultaneous application of the elements of combat power to achieve an effect greater than if each element of combat power was used separately or sequentially.”⁵⁹ The U.S. Army definition goes beyond combining or synchronizing the traditional arms or branches of the military, it now aims at synchronizing and simultaneously applying the warfighting functions and information capabilities in a complementary or reinforcing manner.⁶⁰ Warfighting functions are Movement and Maneuver, Intelligence, Fires, Sustainment, Protection and Mission Command. An example of complimentary capabilities is the use of artillery to suppress the enemy in a bunker complex, which enables the infantry to close with and destroy the enemy; therefore, the fires warfighting function complements the movement and maneuver warfighting function. On the other hand, reinforcing capabilities combine similar systems or capabilities within the same warfighting function to increase the function’s overall capabilities. An example of reinforcing capabilities is the protection of own tanks by

⁵⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁹ Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0: *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, May 2012) 1-14.

⁶⁰ Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0: *Unified Land Operations*, 1-15.

infantry engaging enemy infantry and antitank systems while tanks provide protection and firepower to the infantry.⁶¹

According to Army Training Publication (ATP 3-91): *Division Operations*, BCTs are the Army's primary combined arms, close combat force capable of independent employment that can operate as part of a division or joint task force.⁶² Because it is not feasible to have a unit that would be capable of conducting all missions across the range of military operations, in all types of terrain, against all types of threats, three standardized brigade combat team designs exist: armored, infantry, and Stryker with organic battalion-sized maneuver, fires, reconnaissance, and sustainment units. In accordance with that, it is important to understand that combined arms are employed in different shaped and forms. Militaries address that through organizational design (i.e. BCT) and by task-organizing (i.e. attaching air and missile defense or bridging assets to the BCT).

Today, combined arms can be and are conducted at company level and higher. However, with organizational design one has to be extremely careful at what level and to what extent to integrate combat arms. An integration requires a commander (company level) and staff (battalion and above) to balance the use of all available assets (functions) in response to changes in the operational environment, a task which can be extremely challenging. It is fairly simple to synchronize the use of artillery and infantry, it gets more complicated with space, air assets, long-range missiles, electronic warfare, etc. The

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Department of the Army, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-91: *Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, October 2014), 1-4.

amount of assets available at a lower level can have a negative effect on performance of a unit. Dr. House suggests that organizational design should start at a divisional or fixed-brigade level.⁶³ Only the right balance of organizational design and ability to task-organize will result in flexibility needed to execute operations in today's fluid, complex and multi-domain operational environment.

General Overview of Relevant Slovenian Literature

This section will focus on the Slovenian strategic documents and military doctrine. These sources are essential for development of the process of determining the basic combat unit of the SAF. Foundations for developing the military doctrine, according to the standing basic Slovenian military doctrine publication (*Military Doctrine*, published in 2006), are shown in figure 6.

⁶³ House, *Towards Combined Arms Warfare*, 188.

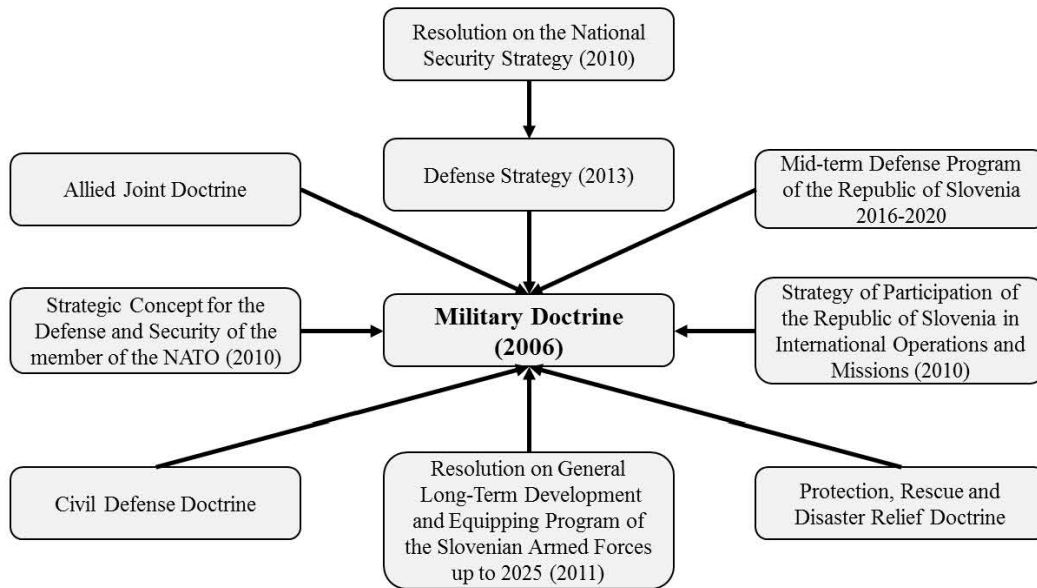


Figure 6. Military Doctrine Input Documents

Source: Branimir Furlan, Darko Petelin, and Gregor Kastelic, *Military Doctrine* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Defensor, Schwarz, 2006), 8, modified by author.

The following three documents are relevant to the research but were not included in the *Military Doctrine*:

1. *Strategy of Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in International Operations and Missions*, published by the Government of Slovenia in 2010 (Strategy for International Operations and Missions).
2. *Mid-term Defense Program of the Republic of Slovenia 2016-2020*, published by the Government of Slovenia in 2016 (Mid-term Defense Program).
3. *Strategic Defense Review*, published by the Ministry of Defense in 2016.

Currently, the significant shortcomings of the strategic documents and military doctrine are:

1. The publishing dates of strategic documents are not aligned. As the *National Security* is updated or renewed, other documents should be updated accordingly. That has not happened as can be seen in figure 6.
2. Most strategic documents do not take into account the severe budget cuts that left the defense sector without a third of its annual budget for the last seven years.

According to NATO defense budget methodology, defense costs of a member country include all funds associated with financing the defense system, retirement costs and protection of classified information. They do not include funds for the Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster or the Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Protection Against Natural and Other Disasters.⁶⁴ The *National Security Strategy* was published in 2010, with the defense budget at its highest point (1,61% of GDP, 583 MN EUR). In 2011, the defense budget began its steep drop (1,30% of GDP, 479 MN EUR) and is predicted to reach the bottom in 2017 (0,91%, 374 MN EUR); with a very slowly recovery in the following years.⁶⁵ All the future budget estimations are based upon forecast of economic trends published by Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development are summarized in figure 7.

Because the *National Security Strategy* was published in 2010, it does not take into account the significant drop in defense sector funding in years 2011-2017.

⁶⁴ Republic of Slovenia, *Mid-term Defense Program*, 40.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 40-43.

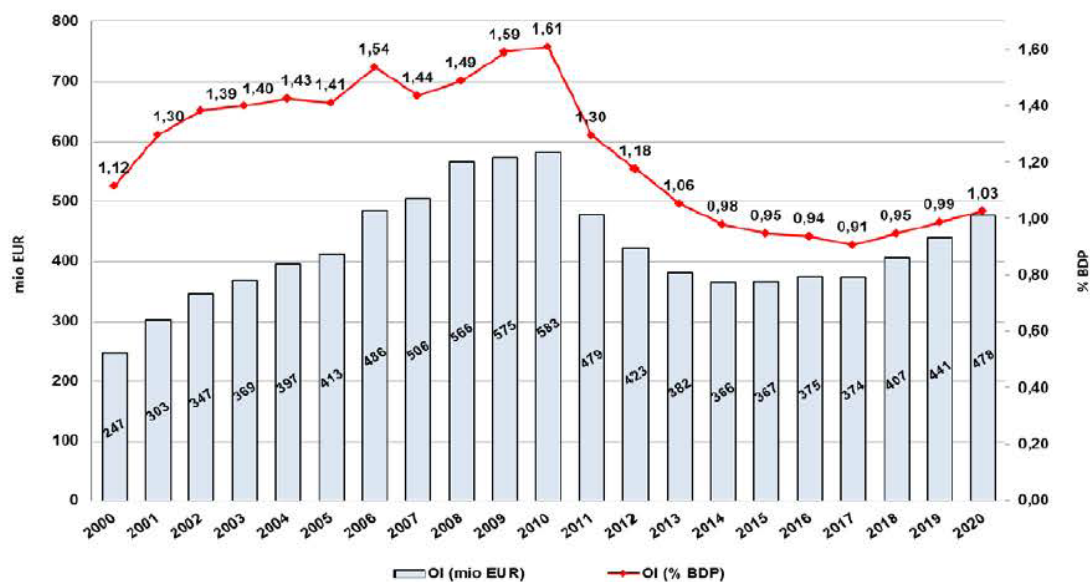


Figure 7. Defense Budget from 2000 to 2020

Source: Government of the Republic of Slovenia, *Srednjeročni obrambni program Republike Slovenije 2016-2020* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: VRS, 2016), 40.

Therefore, throughout the last seven years, the national interests and objectives of Slovenia have remained the same, even though the defense sector has lost 36% of its budget when comparing funds allocated in 2010 to those in 2017. It is unrealistic to expect the elements of national defense to perform its functions in achievement of national objectives while losing a third of its funding.

The *Defense Strategy* was published in 2013 and was based on the *National Security Strategy*, published three years earlier. By that point, the defense budget had been falling for three years (2010-2013); nevertheless, the *Defense Strategy* fails to

mention that or take into account the effects of the then ongoing economic crisis.⁶⁶ It gives very broad and general guidelines that the defense budget will be development-driven and will aim to achieve the NATO recommended 2% of GDP spending for defense with a ratio of 50:30:20 between personnel, operating and investment costs.⁶⁷

The *Strategy of the Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in International Operations and Missions* was for the first (and only) time published in 2010. Similar to the *Defense Strategy*, it does not take into account the falling defense budget nor the effects of the economic crisis. It recaptures the provisions of the *National Security Strategy* regarding the involvement of Slovenian institutions in the international operations and mission. According to the Strategy for International Operations and Missions, to achieve defined objectives, Slovenia will cooperate with allies and international organizations in the following areas:

1. Peacekeeping operations.
2. Crisis response operations, including peace support operations and other activities, international rescue operations in the event of natural and other disasters.
4. Development cooperation.
5. Humanitarian assistance.
6. International civilian missions.
7. Other forms of support, assistance and cooperation.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Republic of Slovenia, *Mid-term Defense Program*, 43.

⁶⁷ Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, *Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Defence, 2013), 46.

⁶⁸ Republic of Slovenia, Government of the Republic of Slovenia, *Strategy of the Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in International Operations and Missions*

According to NATO's Glossary "crisis response" or "peace-support operation" are generic terms that may include conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace building, peace enforcement and humanitarian operations.⁶⁹ Strategy for *International Operations and Missions* also takes on a very broad, comprehensive approach on how to integrate "all appropriate capabilities" when planning and conducting international operations and missions.⁷⁰ Even though armed forces are naturally the bearer of the international operations and missions, the publication mentions the SAF only once. Since 1997, when Slovenia sent its first peacekeepers abroad (Operation ALBA, Albania), members of SAF have participated in OSCE, EU, NATO and UN missions. All the deployments of SAF units have one thing in common; all were stability operations with very low exposure to combat operations. The main reason is the concern of the public and consequently the politicians for the safety of the deployed troops. Thus far, the approving authority, the Government of Slovenia, has only approved participation in missions that were, according to the standing U.S. Joint Doctrine, in Phase IV – Conducting Stability Operations and Phase V – Enable Civil Authority.⁷¹ In addition, the Government usually issues caveats that prohibit deployed SAF units from conducting

(Ljubljana, Slovenia: Republic of Slovenia, Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2010), 11.

⁶⁹ Official NATO website offers definitions of crisis response and peace support operations, accessed March 11, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49192.htm.

⁷⁰ Republic of Slovenia, *Strategy for International Operations and Missions*, 11.

⁷¹ Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0: *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, August, 2011), IV-7, and Republic of Slovenia, *Strategy for International Operations and Missions*, 14.

combat operations while deployed. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the standing policy of Slovenia is for members of SAF to only conduct stability operations when deployed, a provision that should be included in the Strategy IOM.

The *Military Doctrine*, which is the most important document regarding the search for the basic combat unit, has not been updated in eleven years. While the government has sporadically published and updated strategic level documents, the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the SAF have failed to update the basic document that links national interests and objectives to the functioning of the military. Reasons for that are plentiful; however, it is not the purpose of the research to study them. Currently, the standing *Military Doctrine* does not take into account the changed complex operational environment, the prevalent effect of the economic crisis and the defense budget cuts, the provisions of the current *National Security Strategy*, *Defense Strategy* or the *Strategy for International Operations and Missions*. Among others, it is based upon the *Alliance's Strategic Concept* published in 1999, which has been superseded by the *Strategic Concept for the Defense and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty*, adopted at the NATO Summit in Lisbon, 2010.⁷² Furthermore, the *Military Doctrine* does not reflect the last major transformation of the SAF (2013-14), which saw the reorganization of combined arms capable battalions into light infantry regiments, independent combat support battalions into brigade combat support companies and abolishment of the SAF operational level command.

⁷² Branimir Furlan, Darko Petelin, and Gregor Kastelic, *Military Doctrine*. (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Defensor, 2006), 5.

At this time, the *Mid-term Defense Program of the Republic of Slovenia 2016-2020* and the *Strategic Defense Review* are the only strategic level documents that take into consideration the realities of the current operational environment, effects of the economic crisis and the current state of SAF. However, they are still based on the outdated strategic documents and therefore, divided between the real world of today and the world as it existed a decade ago.

Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia

The *National Security Strategy*, published in 2010, provides guidance in the field of national security, defines the national interests and lays out the national security objectives. Furthermore, it defines the policy of responding to specific security threats and risks as well as the organization and functioning of the national security apparatus. Finally, it prescribes the Defense Policy of the Republic of Slovenia. The *National Security Strategy* is the highest strategic document for overall national security, it provides the basis for the development of documents and regulations related to national security.⁷³

The most important national strategic interest, that the military is responsible for achieving, is to ensure respect of the integrity of the country's internationally recognized borders and national territory, including the connection of Slovenia's territorial waters to the international waters.⁷⁴ Slovenia will pursue its national interests autonomously, through bilateral cooperation and an active role in the region, as well as within the United

⁷³ Republic of Slovenia, *National Security Strategy*, 4.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Nations, the European Union, NATO and other international organizations.⁷⁵ According to the *National Security Strategy*, the Defense Policy of Slovenia:

will remain focused on providing the defense capabilities, which are required for ensuring the national defense within the system of collective defense and security and will focus on international operations within NATO and the EU, which will have a direct effect on the national security of the Republic of Slovenia.⁷⁶

In addition, Slovenia will provide:

a proper state of defense preparedness, which includes the size, structure, equipment and efficiency of the Slovenian Armed Forces and non-military capabilities. The ability to respond effectively to military threats will mainly depend on the provision of conditions for an adequate and timely transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in terms of their organisation, equipment and efficiency, taking into account recent trends in the development of armed forces.⁷⁷

The *National Security Strategy* also states that the SAF will be capable of joint operations in multinational operations, without defining the term joint operations.⁷⁸ Both U.S. and NATO doctrine use the term “joint” to describe activities, operations and organizations in which elements of at least two services, departments or nations participate.⁷⁹ Since the SAF air and maritime components are branches of the armed forces, we can assume that the *National Security Strategy* is using the term “joint” to describe combined multinational operations. The *National Security Strategy* also

⁷⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁷⁶ Republic of Slovenia, *National Security Strategy*, 28.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 40.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02: *Terms and Military Symbols* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 2015), 1-52 and *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions*, 90.

prescribes the development of the defense system in the direction of greater interoperability within NATO's collective defense and the defense policy of the EU.⁸⁰

Defense Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia

The *Defense Strategy* is the basic document providing guidance on development, modifications, and supplementations of regulatory, doctrinal, planning and other defense related documents as well on additional matters pertaining to the defense of Slovenia.⁸¹ It was published in 2013 and written in accordance with the provisions of the *National Security Strategy* published in 2010. Figures 8 and 9 provide the list of Slovenia's national interests in the area of defense and defensive objectives. Furthermore, the figures show links between defensive objectives and the national interests. For example, accomplishment of the defensive objective No. 1 directly supports the achievement of national interests No. 1 and 2.

⁸⁰ Republic of Slovenia, *National Security Strategy*, 50.

⁸¹ Republic of Slovenia, *Defense Strategy*, 50.

Slovenia's Interests in the Area of Defense
<p>Interest No. 1 Maintaining independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as inviolability of Slovenia's internationally recognized borders and national territory.</p>
<p>Interest No. 2 Ensuring appropriate level of defense capacity of the state and preparedness of defense capabilities, and thus providing national security of the Republic of Slovenia as well as security and freedoms of its residents at the highest possible level.</p>
<p>Interest No. 3 Implementing common defense interests and the adopted international commitments of the state in the defense and military fields within NATO and the European Union.</p>
<p>Interest No. 4 Peace, security and stability in the world, particularly in the region of South-East Europe.</p>

Figure 8. Slovenia's Interest in the Area of Defense

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, *Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2013), 4-6, modified by author.

Slovenia's Defense Objectives	
Defense Objective No. 1 To provide defense capacity of the state by developing appropriate military and other defense capabilities for efficient implementation of its defense-related interests and for the use of defense capabilities in support of other sub-systems of the Republic of Slovenia's national security system.	Supports National Interests No. 1 and 2
Defense Objective No. 2 To effectively avert military and other contemporary threats posed to the Republic of Slovenia in the field of defense, as well as to defend independence, inviolability and territorial integrity of the state through the collective defense and security systems, and by relying on Slovenia's own forces and capabilities.	Supports National Interest No. 2 and 3
Defense Objective No. 3 To provide for uninterrupted functioning of defense system and other social sub-systems that are of vital importance for efficient response by the state to defense related threats and risks.	Supports National Interests No. 1, 2 and 3
Defense Objective No. 4 To strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia in defense and military fields with allied, partner and friendly countries, and within the United Nations Organization, NATO, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.	Supports National Interests No. 1, 2, 3
Defense Objective No. 5 To contribute in peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts of the international community, and strengthening of security and stability around the world, with the main effort on the region of South-East Europe, and through participation in international operations and missions in accordance with the Republic of Slovenia's interests, objectives and the adopted international commitments.	Supports National Interests No. 3 and 4
Defense Objective No. 6 To raise awareness of society about the importance of the national defense system and to strengthen its reputation among the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia.	Does not directly support any of the National Interests

Figure 9. Slovenia's Defense Objectives

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, *Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2013), 4-6, modified by author.

The defense system of Slovenia is composed of the military and non-military segment. The military part is represented by the Slovenian Armed Forces, which are the major pillar of development of military capabilities and military defense of Slovenia.⁸² According to the *Defense Strategy*, the mission of the SAF is “to ensure military power of

⁸² Republic of Slovenia, *Defense Strategy*, 32.

the Republic of Slovenia through military capabilities, which represents the most powerful and the outmost instrument of the state for promoting and implementing its national interests, and national security objectives”.⁸³ The *Defense Strategy* states that the SAF will be organized at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.⁸⁴ The highest level formation in the SAF is a brigade, which makes a need for an operational level command questionable. The *Defense Strategy* adequately sums up potential consequences of limiting financial resources:

The development of the Slovenian Armed Forces will not be feasible; therefore, priority will be on prevention of weakening of their war-fighting power and operational capacity. Our focus will remain on maintaining the capabilities, as well as the readiness and usability of the Slovenian Armed Forces, for the accomplishment of their main tasks in accordance with the national long and mid-term development plans and programs, the agreed and adopted priority tasks in the development of defense capabilities of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, and other international commitments of the state... Military capabilities exceeding national capacity or ambitions will be provided within the Alliance or in accordance with bilateral and multilateral international agreements.⁸⁵

To augment the size of the military forces in case of a severe threat to the national security, the government can authorize an increase in the SAF strength up to 25,000 troops or even reintroduce all elements of military duty.⁸⁶ For now, both concepts exist only in theory. The *Defense Strategy* also talks about a comprehensive defense reform, which has yet to begin.

⁸³ Republic of Slovenia, *Defense Strategy*, 34.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 38.

Resolution on General Long-Term Development and Equipping Program of the
Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025

The Resolution on Long-term Equipping and Development is the highest development and guidance document for the SAF as well as the principal long-term planning document providing a framework for developing capabilities required by Slovenia in the pursuit of its national interests in the field of defense.⁸⁷ The main purpose of the SAF is “to contribute to the implementation of interests and national security objectives of Slovenia through military capabilities.”⁸⁸ The main purpose forms a basis for the missions and main tasks of the SAF depicted in figure 10.

One of the most important provisions of the *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping*, is that Slovenia will not renounce an appropriate level of its own defense capability and readiness and will maintain a reasonable amount of independence and autonomy in defense and military areas.⁸⁹ Very specific guidance is given regarding task organizing and generating capabilities:

In the national context, they will be capable of forming task-force tactical units up to brigade level. For operations outside the territory of the Republic of Slovenia, a battalion-level unit will be set up, trained and capable of conducting the full spectrum of operations in up to one-year long rotations. This will be achieved by generating at least four infantry battalion sized combat cores. Against this background the Slovenian Armed Forces will, in addition to the existing motorized infantry' battalion group, develop a medium infantry' battalion group by 2020 at the latest.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Republic of Slovenia, *Resolution of Long-term Development and Equipping*, 4.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 16.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 18.

1 st mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces
To provide defense capacity and to carry out military defense of the Republic of Slovenia.
Tasks deriving from the 1st mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish planned capabilities of the Slovenian Armed Forces and to sustain an appropriate level of their readiness. • To carry out national military defense. • To fulfil international commitments under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.
2 nd mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces
To contribute to international peace, security and stability with military means.
Tasks deriving from the 2nd mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen cooperation and confidence between the Slovenian Armed Forces and the armed forces of the allies and friendly nations. • To pursue interests and national security objectives of the Republic of Slovenia through participation in international operations and missions.
3 rd mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces
To participate in the system of protection against natural and other disasters.
Task deriving from the 3rd mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide dual-use capabilities and to participate in protection, rescue and relief operations during natural and other disasters in accordance with plans, and the equipping and training level of the Slovenian Armed Forces.
4 th mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces
To support other national bodies and organizations in the provision of security.
Task deriving from the 4th mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support other national bodies and organizations in accordance with plans as well as available equipment and level of training of the Slovenian Armed Forces. • To evacuate citizens of the Republic of Slovenia from abroad during crisis.

Figure 10. Missions and Main Tasks of the Slovenian Armed Forces

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, *Resolution on the General-Long-Term Development and Equipping Programme of the Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2011), 8-9, modified by author.

The principal long-term goal of the SAF is to execute national defense within the system of collective defense and security, the other long-term goals and priorities are depicted in figure 11.

Long-term Goal 1 of the Slovenian Armed Forces
To enable active and credible operation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in the system of collective defense and security and enhanced participation in international operations and missions. These have to be in line with the principles of moderate geographic dispersion and higher specialization, and planned participation in the system of protection against natural and other disasters and support of other national authorities and bodies in responding to contemporary sources of threat, in accordance with national interests, adopted commitments, available resources and comprehensive approach.
Priorities for the long-term goal 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve and maintain the planned operational readiness level of the SAF HQs and units. • To fulfil adopted commitments in the system of collective defense and security with the purpose of reaching common goals. • To gradually increase sustainability and complexity of the SAF participation in international operations and missions. • To participate, as priority, in the system of protection against natural and other disasters in responding to contemporary non-military sources of threat in the national territory.
Long-term Goal 2 of the Slovenian Armed Forces
Long-term goal 2 is to ensure appropriate readiness of the SAF for operation and cooperation with other defense capabilities of Slovenia through selective and balanced development of the SAF capabilities across the full spectrum of operation.
Priorities for the long-term goal 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gradually transform military capabilities in conjunction with the planned elimination of non-priority capabilities. • To increase combat capabilities of the SAF focusing on the generation of a medium infantry battalion group. • To balance and increase critical operational capabilities including timely availability of forces, efficient operation, efficient command and control system, efficient intelligence, and maneuverability, survivability and protection of forces, and logistic sustainability. • To preserve and develop military professional, specialist and other knowledge, skills and experiences that are of vital importance for defense.
Long-term Goal 3 of the Slovenian Armed Forces
The process of functional professionalization, to transform the Slovenian Armed Forces into a highly professional and efficient military organization capable of joint operation. The force must be able to function within multinational military framework in accordance with modern concepts and doctrines, and to a reasonable extent maintain its ability for efficient task accomplishment deriving from the doctrine on military strategic reserve formation and operation.
Priorities for the long-term goal 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish a more efficient system of human resource management. • To develop a comprehensive system of military education and training in cooperation with the public education system. • To acquire knowledge about, develop and use modern doctrines and to increase joint operation capabilities. • To pursue effective public relations strategy and cooperation with civil society organizations. • To improve organization and security culture within the SAF and to promote military ethics.

Figure 11. Long Term Goals of the Slovenian Armed Forces

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, Resolution on the General-Long-Term Development and Equipping Programme of the Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025 (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2011), 20, modified by author.

The *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* states that:

The basis of the Slovenian Armed Force land capabilities will be combat capabilities of medium, light (motorized) and mountain infantry, and special operations forces. Light and medium infantry capabilities will serve as a basis for a task-based motorized and medium infantry battalion group.⁹¹

The armed forces will be built on the principle of modularity as task forces; furthermore, at the tactical level, the SAF will include brigade and regiment-level commands.⁹² For employment within Slovenia, the highest level unit will be a brigade tasks force, the highest level unit for operations abroad will be a task force infantry battalion battle group.⁹³

There are some other plans included in the *Resolution on Long-term Equipping and Development*:

1. Development of tactical fixed wing transport and rotary wing airlift with the capability of transporting an infantry company.
2. Development of indirect fire support capabilities through an acquisition of new automatic mortar and mobile self-propelled artillery systems with guided munitions, all integrated in digital and network enabled fire management systems.⁹⁴

34. ⁹¹ Republic of Slovenia, *Resolution of Long-term Development and Equipping*,

⁹² Ibid., 30.

⁹³ Ibid., 18.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 40-46.

With the financial crisis and defense budget cuts, all plans based upon acquisition of new materiel were put on a permanent hold.

According to the *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* and in line with the changed defense planning process in NATO and the EU, the development of the SAF was planned to transition from a force-driven to a capability-based organization.⁹⁵ Formation of the capabilities will be oriented towards effects and based upon linking the key elements of capabilities: personnel, materiel, facilities, doctrine, organization, leadership, training and interoperability.⁹⁶ The further development of the SAF will depend largely on the existing and new NATO force goals and capability targets.⁹⁷ Since that is classified information, the research does not consider them.

However, if followed and implemented, they could give the SAF:

An additional transformation and developmental momentum and at the same time allow for a continuous adaptation to changes in security environment in security environment in developing forces and capabilities.⁹⁸

The most important information brought forth by the research of the Slovenian strategic documents indicates what the basic combat unit of the SAF should be: “The basic component of these capabilities will be companies, with an exception of special operations forces.”⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Ibid., 32.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 30.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 32.

⁹⁹ Republic of Slovenia, *Resolution of Long-term Development and Equipping*, 30.

Mid-term Defense Program of the Republic of Slovenia 2016-2020

The *Mid-term Defense Program* lays out the main guidelines regarding the functioning and development of the Slovenian defense system. It differs from other strategic documents because it takes into consideration the realities of the current financial situation. Its implementation is adjusted to the financial capabilities of Slovenia and is delaying the requirements of the *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* into the period past 2020.¹⁰⁰ The development of the military capabilities up to 2020 will be focused on combat and combat support units with emphasis on motorized and mountain infantry and special forces.¹⁰¹ Infantry capabilities will be established in infantry companies, organized in infantry regiments that will form a basis for formation of two battalion battle groups.¹⁰²

A task force brigade battle group will be the highest-level combat unit employed within Slovenia and a battalion battle group outside Slovenia.¹⁰³ The level of ambition is determined by the *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* and has been taken into account when determining NATO Capability Codes for Slovenia.¹⁰⁴ SAF developmental priorities are: medium (mechanized) battalion battle group, CBRN capabilities, enhancement of battlefield maneuver, firepower and mobility, proper

¹⁰⁰ Republic of Slovenia, *Mid-term Defense Program*, 4.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

indirect fire support and enhancement of mobile communication capabilities.¹⁰⁵ By achieving the level of ambition, the SAF will be capable of conducting combined arms warfare within the framework of task-organized capability (brigade level in Slovenia, battalion level abroad), that will be trained, equipped and manned across the spectrum of operations for a duration of up to a year.¹⁰⁶ Due to financial constraints, the development of the most important SAF future capability – a medium (mechanized) battalion battle group, will be delayed until after 2023.¹⁰⁷ Until then, the SAF will provide a second motorized battalion battle group. Development of defense capabilities will be based upon development of infantry and special forces capabilities. Infantry capabilities will be established through infantry companies, organized in infantry regiments that will form a basis for the formation of two battalion battle groups (BN BG).¹⁰⁸

At the end of mid-term, SAF will account for 9100 personnel, 7600 active duty and 1500 strategic reserve troops. In 2020, the ratio of cost between personnel, operations and investments will be 67:18:15, which is a move towards the NATO preferred 50:30:20 ratio.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Republic of Slovenia, *Mid-term Defense Program*, 7.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 19.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 6.

Military Doctrine

Even though the *Military Doctrine* is outdated and not aligned with current financial realities, it still provides a solid basis for the research of the basic purpose of the SAF and its role within the national security system. The *Military Doctrine*:

defines principles on the organisation, employment and operation of the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) in providing military defence of the state and carrying out other missions, through which the defence strategy of the Republic of Slovenia (RS) is implemented. The doctrine lays down fundamental principles by which the Slovenian Armed Forces or its components guide their action in the defence and security area to support national interests and objectives. The doctrine supports the transition of the Slovenian Armed Forces through a period of transformation, which dictates new ways of thinking and the reformation of the armed forces to face new challenges and threats.¹¹⁰

The *Military Doctrine* specifies what the mission, mission essential tasks and other tasks of the SAF are:

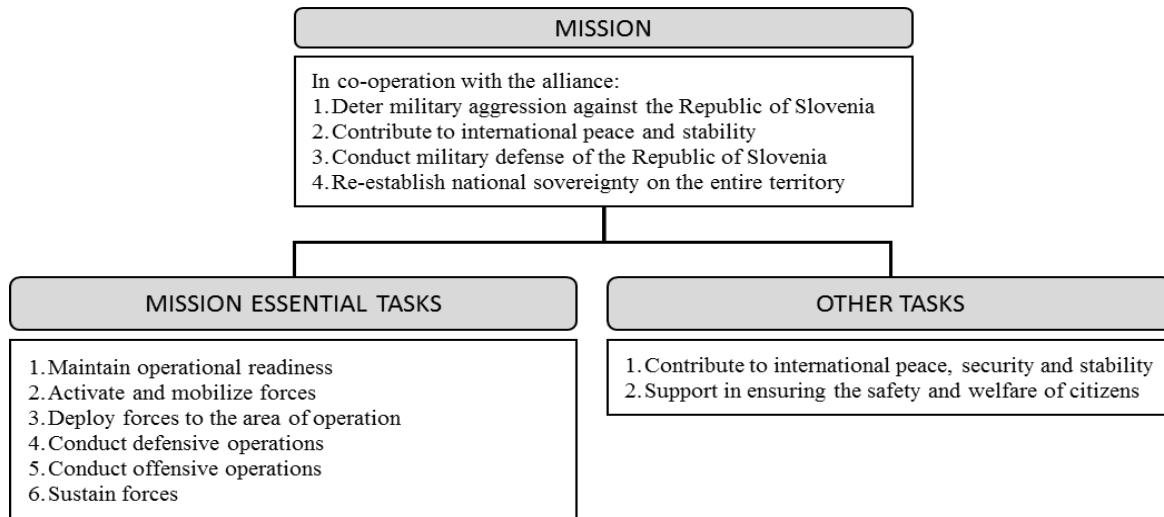


Figure 12. Mission, Mission Essential and Other Tasks

Source: Branimir Furlan, *Military Doctrine* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Defensor, Schwarz, 2006), 24, modified by author.

¹¹⁰ Furlan, *Military Doctrine*, 7.

Because the *Military Doctrine* was published in 2006, it does not take into account all standing documents that should guide its development according to figure 6 of this research.

In terms of classification of forces, the *Military Doctrine* distinguishes forces according to their:

1. Combat role (combat, combat support, combat service support and command support).
2. Deployability (deployable, non-deployable).
3. Operational readiness (high readiness forces (2-90 days), low-readiness forces (91-180 days), long-term build-up forces (more than 365 days)).¹¹¹

The forms and types of operations the SAF conducts are: offensive, defensive, stability, support, special, enabling and information.¹¹²

The main drawbacks of the standing *Military Doctrine* are:

1. It is not aligned with national strategic documents.
2. It does not take into account the major changes of the last decade including the transformation of the SAF.
3. It makes an assumption that the SAF is capable of conducting activities across the full spectrum of operations.
4. It does not take into account the changed operational environment (decrease in size and number of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, migrant crisis in

¹¹¹ Furlan, *Military Doctrine*, 27.

¹¹² Ibid., 48.

Europe, expansion of the EU and establishment of the Schengen Zone, etc.) and changes in NATO over the last ten years.

5. It does not give specific guidelines on the doctrine publication structure-scheme (such as Army Doctrine 2015), it only gives a general idea on the levels of doctrine (philosophy-principles-concepts, implementation-instructions, task accomplishment procedures).¹¹³

The current state of the *Military Doctrine* should be addressed as soon as possible. Even in the concluding chapter, the publication states that it provides guidelines and principles for the implementation of Slovenia's defense strategy for a period of five years, which concluded in 2011.¹¹⁴

Chapter Summary

The literature review focused on the information necessary to discover the process of determining the basic combat unit. The last major transformation of the U.S. Army is invaluable in analyzing the input, process and the output of the transformation that resulted in the U.S. Army's transition from a division to a brigade-centric force. However, the process is of somewhat limited value when it comes to determining the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces. This is because the U.S. Army has three significantly different types of brigade combat teams, which undermines the idea of a basic combat unit. Therefore, the basic combat unit of the U.S. Army is a brigade-sized force, which comes in three different shapes – ABCT, IBCT and SBCT. This study aims

¹¹³ Furlan, *Military Doctrine*, 91.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

to answer the question whether the SAF has the capacity to be organized in a similar manner on a smaller scale, either at the battalion or even company-sized level. The review of the documents leading up to as well as the analysis of the U.S. Army transformation provides the foundation for the future organization of the SAF. Planners at the SAF General Staff will have to make difficult decisions to properly balance protection, mobility and firepower. They will have to conduct a thorough analysis of the required capabilities, which will then guide the design of the basic combat unit. One of the most challenging questions will be regarding structure of the basic combat unit, and whether its formation will be locked or modular. In addition, the concept of the new basic combat unit has to go beyond simulations, it needs to be tested under austere battle conditions. Only once the concept has been proven to function, the unit can be integrated into the SAF organizational structure via a transformation of the armed forces.

This study also strives to provide the best answer to what combined arms concept means to the SAF, how it is employed and how has the financial crisis affected its development and implementation. While the concept is undefined in the realm of doctrine it has been, with minor setbacks, successfully implemented at the battalion battle group level. When comparing the U.S. Army and SAF doctrinal way of war there is not much difference; however, if you compare the actual employment of units, the difference is vast. While the U.S. Army has been heavily involved in major combat operations, the SAF has been mostly involved with peacekeeping or stability operations. It is very unlikely that will change in the future. That should be one of the driving factors behind the modernization of the Slovenian military doctrine.

Slovenian strategic documents provide a solid foundation for determining the requirements of the SAF. The basic combat unit has to be capable of fulfilling those requirements. Whether it is a capability of operating independently, conducting combined arms operations, defending the territorial sovereignty of Slovenia or assisting in protection, rescue and disaster relief, the basic combat unit has to be able to perform all of these functions. Two factors had an immense effect on the research – the fact that the strategic documents and the doctrine are outdated and unaligned, and a restricted access to the NATO and SAF documents regarding the development of the Slovenian battalion battle group. To an extent, this is mitigated by the search for additional sources and taking into consideration assumptions laid out in chapter 1.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Research and the Research Questions

The purpose of the study is to persuade the Chief Decision Maker (CDM), Chief of the General Staff of the SAF, that the proposed basic combat unit is a suitable, feasible, and acceptable solution to close the current capability gap. The main concerns the CDM is faced with are: the consequences of a significant loss of the defense budget resulting in very limited resources available, a the third consecutive negative annual report on the readiness of the SAF, outdated military doctrine that is not aligned with the national strategic documents, and the SAF's international obligations. In order for the CDM to implement the findings of this research, a comprehensive transformation of the SAF needs to be conducted. Other stakeholders include brigade and regimental commanders who will be directly influenced by a potential change of the basic combat unit. They are the primary personnel that will carry out the future transformation and have direct access to the Chief of the General Staff, therefore a potential to influence his decisions. The CDM's primary evaluation criteria will be the resources available and the ability of the transformed SAF to carry out its assigned tasks as prescribed by the *Defense Act* and the national strategic documents. The proposed basic combat unit has to be a suitable, feasible, and acceptable solution when evaluated by the CDM and through the lens of the future SAF transformation.

In order to answer the primary research question, three secondary questions were developed. The first secondary question: what was the process of the U.S. Army's transition from a division to a brigade-centric force? To answer, the author conducted an

extensive research on the background of the transformation based on an applied professional case study method. With the wide range of sources, the research was narrowed to the events that led to the transformation, the inputs, the general process, and the outcome of the transformation. The sources used were studies, plans and publications that led, and guided the transformation, as well as reports and publications that analyzed the outcomes of the transformation. Variety of sources guaranteed that the process was studied from more than one point of view and eliminated possible biases. The second secondary question: what kind of combined arms capabilities must the basic combat unit have? The main requirement for the U.S. Army's basic combat unit is the ability to independently conduct combined arms warfare. The same applies to the SAF's basic combat unit. However, while the U.S. Army has developed three types of brigade combat teams, the SAF does not have the capacity to develop more than one basic combat unit. Therefore, the military doctrine should provide the definition of how the concept of combined arms is employed within the SAF. The *Military Doctrine* does not provide that guidance. For that reason, the author has studied the employment of the SAF units in the execution of tasks prescribed by the *Defense Act* and the strategic documents within the period of 2003 to 2017. The third secondary question: what are the inputs into the process of determining the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces? To answer that, the author reviewed in detail all standing Slovenian national strategic documents and the *Military Doctrine* publication. While the strategic documents take a contradictory stand on the basic combat unit, they still provide a framework for the employment of that unit as well its required capabilities. In addition, the review of additional sources beyond strategic documents resulted in description of the current state of the SAF.

Research Methodology

The author used an applied professional case study methodology for the research, which falls under a basic qualitative research. According to Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell's *Qualitative Research*, the basic qualitative research focuses on meaning, understanding and the process, a purposeful sample, data collection, inductive and comparative data analysis and results in a richly descriptive data presented as themes or categories.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the author has conducted a review of:

1. Available sources on the transition of the U.S. Army from a division to a brigade-centric force to understand the process of military transformation.
2. Relevant sources on the combined arms concept as the most important capability of a basic combat unit.
3. Slovenian national strategic documents and doctrine to provide framework on which the concept of a basic combat unit can be built.

To understand the meaning and the process of the transition of the U.S. Army from a division to a brigade-centric force, the author has studied the last major U.S. Army transformation. Even though the U.S. Army and the Slovenian Armed Forces cannot be directly compared due to various reasons, most obvious the size and the employment of the force, there are processes and concepts that are applicable to both. Therefore, the transformation of the U.S. Army from a division to a brigade-centric force served as a case study for discovering the process of determining a basic combat unit.

¹¹⁵ Sharan B. Merriam, and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementations* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015), 42.

This research is an applied qualitative professional case study with a modified capability based assessment (CBA) that takes into account the professional body of knowledge. The product of CBA is a materiel or non-materiel approach, with DOTMLPF-P implications.¹¹⁶ A modified CBA was applied to the Slovenian national strategic documents in order to identify potential capability gaps regarding the basic combat unit of the SAF.

The first analytical phase of the CBA process is the Functional Area Analysis (FAA). FAA describes how the force will operate, the timeframe and environment in which it must operate, its required capabilities (in terms of missions and effects), and its defining physical and operational characteristics.¹¹⁷ This is done through chapters 1 and 2, with the background on the current status of the SAF and review of the inputs and the results of the U.S. Army's last major transformation. Those are then evaluated through the lens of the current and future required capabilities and tasks of the SAF as they are prescribed by the Slovenian strategic documents.

The second phase of the CBA process is the Functional Needs Analysis (FNA), which is used to assess the capabilities of the current and programmed force to meet the objectives identified in the FAA. The main purpose of the FNA is to identify capability gaps and then prioritize them in operational terms. The primary input is the FAA and the

¹¹⁶ Command and General Staff College, Department of Logistics and Resources Operations, *F100: Managing Army Change, Selected Readings and References, Joint and Army Capability Development*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CGSC, June 2016, F102RA-14.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

output analysis is a list of capability gaps, redundancies, shortfalls, and an estimate of the timeframe of when a solution is required.¹¹⁸

The last phase of the CBA process is the Functional Solution Analysis (FSA), where the capability gaps and needs identified during the FNA are analyzed across the DOTMLPF-P spectrum. For the purpose of this research, the potential solutions are evaluated only through the doctrine, organization and materiel domains.

The following approach to conduct the research was developed by the author.

CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 3	CHAPTER 4	CHAPTER 5
Background and Starting Position R1	Literature review	Methodology	Analysis R2	Recommendation for the CDM R3
MODIFIED CAPABILITIES BASED ASSESSMENT				
PHASE 1 Functional Area Analysis			PHASE 2 Functional Needs Analysis	PHASE 3 Functional Solution Analysis
MODIFIED DOTMLPF-P ANALYSIS				
	Review of the trans. of U.S. Army across D-O-M-P elements		Analysis of required SAF capabilities across D-O-M elements	Proposed solutions for SAF across D-O-M elements
	Review of the SAF requirements across D-O-M elements		R2 improved by stakeholder analysis – basis for R3	

Figure 13. Approach to the Conduct of the Research

Source: Created by author.

¹¹⁸ Command and General Staff College, *F100: Managing Army Change, Selected Readings and References*, F102RA-14.

In chapter 4, the Personal Initial Recommendation (R1) will be evaluated according to the following model with the output (R2) as the Informed Position. R2 will then be evaluated through the lens of the Chief Decision Maker and stakeholders to determine the Recommended Solution (R3).

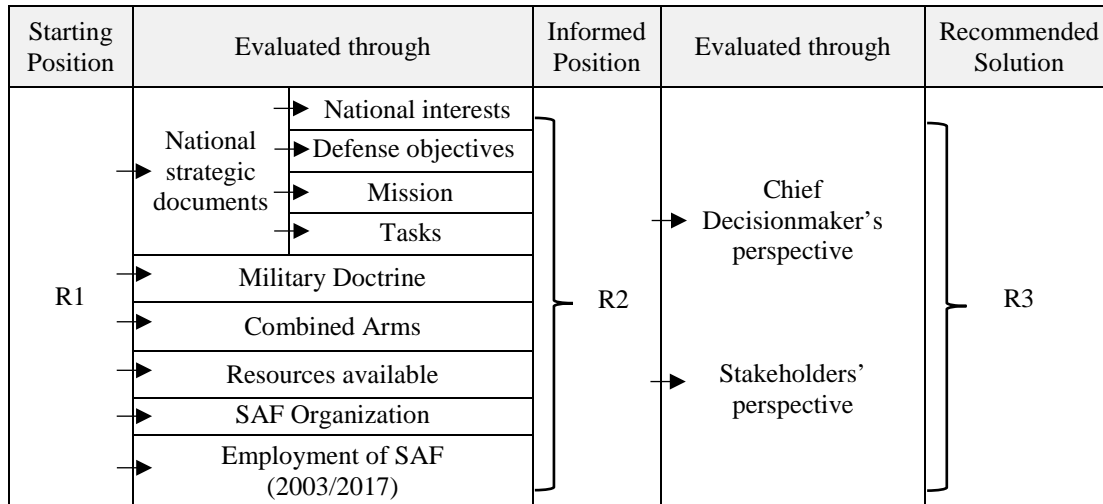


Figure 14. Research Model

Source: Created by author.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the background and description of the applied professional case study used to answer the primary and secondary research questions. It explains the rationale behind the selection of the U.S. Army transformation, combined arms concept and Slovenian strategic documents as the main themes of the Literature Review chapter. Furthermore, it explains why all findings were not applicable in the search for the SAF's basic combat unit. Finally, this chapter lays out the framework that leads into the Analysis chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine what the basic combat unit of the Slovenian Armed Forces should be. As per adopted definition, a basic combat unit has to be capable of independent employment, has to have a composition of combined arms, and must be capable of carrying out missions and tasks prescribed for the military by the strategic documents. At present, neither the Slovenian military doctrine nor other available sources define a basic combat unit. The *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* briefly mentions a company as a basic component of the capabilities of the armed forces but provides no context or further detail on how that unit should be organized, trained or equipped. By design, a regiment is the SAF's basic building block; however, in line with its current organization, it is not capable of conducting independent operations and is very limited in terms of combined arms operations. In accordance with the Slovenia's commitment to NATO and the guidance provided by the strategic documents, regiments take turns in forming a motorized battalion battle group with CBRN, EOD, sustainment, antitank, artillery, and signal modules attached from brigade level and above. Because of limited resources available, only one battalion battle group can be formed, trained and equipped at any given time.

The purpose of this chapter is to first answer the secondary questions through the analysis of the literature review presented in chapter 2. The Initial Personal Recommendation (R1), introduced in chapter 1, will then be evaluated with consideration

to the analysis of literature reviewed and according to the Research Model presented in chapter 3.

What aspects of the process of transformation of the U.S. Army from a division to a brigade-centric force are applicable to the Slovenian Armed Forces?

One of the most important lessons of the last major U.S. Army transformation is that the process of a transformation has to be an effort to close a capability gap and not to reorganize the armed forces in order to integrate a new basic combat unit. The end state of the transformation was not a transition from a division to a brigade-centric force, it was to close the capability gap that came about with the end of Cold War and protracted involvement in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. In addition, the purpose of the transformation must be widely publicized and strong support must be obtained through an aggressive, yet transparent information campaign. Transformation starts with an extensive analysis of the current status of forces evaluated through the lens of required capabilities, and with an evaluation of the last major transformation. The process must involve discussions led by prominent institutions in the field of defense. The process that led to the transition from a division to a brigade-centric force identified the following requirements for a BCT:

1. Deployable anywhere in the world in 96 hours.
2. Self-sustainable for a designated period of time.
3. Able to independently conduct combined arms operations.
4. Capable of carrying out all missions as prescribed by the strategic documents.

In addition:

1. The transformation was planned to be executed within planned defense budget.

2. The number of deployable units had to increase significantly.

The concept of U.S. Army's three different brigade combat teams is not directly applicable to the SAF because of the vastly different size and employment of the armed forces. The three BCTs balance the concepts of mobility, protection and firepower, which in turn generally advocates which BCT will be used in a specific operational environment (ABCT – offensive, SBCT – stability, IBCT – restricted terrain). The SAF does not have a capacity for different types of units executing different missions and tasks. The same basic combat unit has to be capable of, with minor adjustments, executing all tasks prescribed by the strategic documents. For the reasons mentioned above, development of a universal basic combat unit is the only feasible approach. Therefore, significant trade-offs will have to be made in terms of mobility, protection and firepower. The strategic environment, resources available and intended employment of the armed forces should drive the decisions behind the trade-offs. In terms of combined arms, all three BCTs organically include the following assets: intelligence collection, reconnaissance, indirect fire, signal, engineers, and sustainment in addition to either light-motorized-mechanized infantry or armor units.

What kind of combined arms capabilities must a basic combat unit have?

By definition, a combined arms concept is based on at least two or more arms or branches working together. The U.S. Army takes that definition to a level higher with aims of synchronizing and simultaneously applying the warfighting functions in a complementary or reinforcing manner. The lowest level at which the warfighting functions can be integrated is a brigade, or potentially a battalion-level force. At a company level, without staff, only some arms or branches can be combined or integrated.

Since the SAF basic combat unit is a company-size element, the combined arms concept of integrated warfighting functions cannot be applied to it. The resources available and required capabilities will drive the design of the SAF combined arms organization.

According to the current strategic documents and commitments to NATO, the basic combat unit should be built on the existing framework of motorized infantry capabilities, which is the aging Styer-based 6x6 Valuk (Light Wheeled Armored Vehicle) with a 12.7 machine gun or 40 mm automatic grenade launcher armament. The SAF planned for the 8x8 Svarun (Middle Wheeled Armored Vehicle) to be the basic combat vehicle used by motorized battalions. However, the procurement of 8x8 vehicles was canceled in 2012 leaving the SAF with only 30 Svarun vehicles. When designing a basic combat unit, the largest trade-off will have to be made in terms of firepower and protection. A company-sized unit will not have organic artillery assets. In Slovenia, it will always have to operate within the range of higher echelon artillery, which is about 30 km for the SAF TN-90 howitzer. Abroad, it will have to operate within the range of Alliance artillery assets and available close quarter attack aviation. Lack of organic firepower will be, to a very low extent, mitigated by the use of organic 60 mm mortar section.

An example of how the strategic documents direct the combined arms requirements of the basic combat unit is the guidance found in the *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* on the employment of armored capabilities. There is only one tank company in the entire SAF. Its mission is to "conduct joint operations within the national context and to enable training for infantry units with tanks and anti-

armor combat.”¹¹⁹ Accordingly, the SAF does not have a capability to conduct armor warfare. To defend against an armor threat, the basic combat unit has to include modern anti-tank assets that will outrange all existing armored vehicles’ weapon systems. In addition, with the absence of armor assets, the basic combat unit will rely on limited organic combat engineers and manpad-based air defense capabilities for protection. When operating in Slovenia, basic combat units will have to mitigate the risk of inadequate organic protection assets by using terrain to their advantage. With light infantry as the foundation of the basic combat unit, they should be able to operate in restricted and severely restricted terrain and seek such terrain to conduct operations. Abroad, the basic combat unit will have to heavily rely on the Alliance to enhance its protection by the way of providing additional assets or assigning them less risky missions. To complete the combined arms concept, the basic combat unit will organically include a pair of sniper teams, a CBRN specialist, medical team, UAS team and a sustainment element.

Before a proposed combined arms design can be implemented through the next transformation, military doctrine needs to be updated and the concept needs to be integrated into doctrine. Potential procurements and changes in training will follow.

What is the framework prescribed by the Slovenian strategic documents
for determining the basic combat unit?

In accordance with the *National Security Strategy*, the fundamental mission of the Slovenian military, and therefore a basic combat unit task, is to defend Slovenia and

¹¹⁹ Republic of Slovenia, *Resolution on Long-term Equipping and Development*, 34.

ensure integrity of the country's borders and national territory. The *Defense Strategy* adds that the SAF needs to ensure appropriate level of readiness and carry out common defense and international commitments. Among those commitments is the participation in crisis response and peace support operations. The *Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping* lists additional missions and tasks applicable to the basic combat unit: provide dual-use capabilities for participation in protection, rescue and relief operations during natural and other disasters and support other national bodies and organizations in the provision of security. The most important directive of the strategic documents is that, even though a member of EU and NATO, Slovenia will maintain a reasonable amount of independence and autonomy in defense. Therefore, the essential required capability of the armed forces is the defense of homeland. That is the driving factor behind the design of the basic combat unit with its overarching requirements: the capability to conduct defensive operations and to deploy to "crisis response" or "peace support operations."

The *Mid-term Defense Program* discusses the development of a battalion battle group, which could be perceived as in conflict with a company-sized basic combat unit. However, the organization of those battle groups is an internal matter of the SAF and can be changed. The future organizational design of the SAF should be built upon a company-sized basic combat unit. The requirement for a battalion battle group can be achieved by transforming existing regimental headquarters into an administrative entity able to command and control up to five companies. That would effectively replace the current design where the regiments, augmented by combat support and combat service

support modules, take turns in forming a motorized battalion battle group available for NATO.

The basic document that should drive the development of a basic combat unit is the *Military Doctrine*. The publication was written in 2006, when the SAF was riding on a wave of successful integration into European Union and NATO and was still transitioning from a conscription-based to an all-volunteer military. The *Military Doctrine* is not aligned with standing strategic documents and does not take into account the effects of the financial crisis, neither reflects a decade of changes in the operational environment. On the other hand, it does specify the mission and essential tasks of the SAF, which the basic combat unit will have to carry out: defense of homeland, participate in international operations, reestablish national sovereignty of Slovenia (if necessary).¹²⁰ The mission essential tasks, associated with a basic combat unit, that support the mission of SAF are: maintain operational readiness, deploy forces and conduct offensive and-or defensive operations, sustain forces. Based on an analysis of the literature, the basic combat unit of the SAF must possess the following characteristics:

1. Able to operate independently.
2. Self-sustainable for a defined period of time.
3. Combined arms organized.
4. Self-sustainable for a defined period of time.
5. Airmobile, deployable around the world in a defined time frame.
6. Dual-use (pure military operations, response to natural and other disasters).

¹²⁰ See page 56 of the research.

7. Organized in manner that enhances execution of crisis response and peace support operations (integration into NATO command and control structure, interoperability with Allies).

According to the reviewed literature, the basic combat unit should be:

1. Based on existing motorized capabilities.
2. Limited in areas of firepower and protection and augmented as needed.
3. Deployed to crisis response and peace support operations with caveats on its employment.

Application of the Research Model

In this section, R1: Initial Personal Recommendation, will be evaluated through the lens of:

1. Provisions of the National Security Strategy.
2. Provisions of the Defense Strategy.
3. Resolution on Long-term Development and Equipping.
4. Military Doctrine.
5. Combined Arms concept.
6. Research questions.

First, evaluation of R1 through the lens of the *National Security Strategy* in accordance with the modified table of national interests and defensive objectives depicted in figures 15 and 16.

1. Defense objective No. 1: With a reorganization based on R1, the capacity of the armed forces to defend Slovenia would increase greatly. Instead of four bare infantry regiments, SAF would operate with 16 independent companies.

2. Defense objective No. 2: Based on commitments and requirements, the SAF could contribute either independent companies or a battalion battle group to NATO and EU Pool of Forces. The regimental headquarters, which would normally only serve as an administrative entity, would provide staff as well as command and control for three to five companies.
3. By deploying to crisis response and peace support operations, the SAF accomplishes its role in achieving defense objectives 4 and 5. Again, an independent company can be deployed, or three to five companies can be combined under a regimental command and then deployed. R1, with organic enablers, is capable of conducting a wider array of operations and offers more flexibility than the current organization.

Therefore, with its design, the R1 can achieve defensive objectives No. 1, 2, 4 and 5, which support Slovenia's interest in the area of defense. The Government of Slovenia with its ministries is responsible for the achievement of the defense objective No. 3 and Ministry of Defense with Ministry of Education are primarily responsible for the achievement of the defense objective No. 6.

Slovenia's Interests in the Area of Defense
Interest No. 1: Maintaining independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.
Interest No. 2: Ensuring appropriate level of defense capacity of the state and preparedness.
Interest No. 3: Implementing common defense interests and the adopted international commitments.
Interest No. 4: Peace, security and stability in the world.

Figure 15. Slovenia's Interest in the Area of Defense, Modified.

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, *Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2013), 4-6, modified by author.

Slovenia's Defense Objectives	Supports Nat. interest	R1
Defense Objective No. 1 To provide defense capacity of the state.	No. 1 and 2	YES
Defense Objective No. 2 To effectively avert military and other contemporary threats, defend independence, through the collective defense and security systems, and by relying on Slovenia's own forces and capabilities.	No. 2 and 3	YES
Defense Objective No. 3 To provide for uninterrupted functioning of defense system.	No. 1, 2 and 3	N/A
Defense Objective No. 4 To strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation in defense and military fields with allied, partner and friendly countries,	No. 1, 2, 3	YES
Defense Objective No. 5 To contribute in peacebuilding and peacekeeping through participation in international operations and missions.	No. 3 and 4	YES
Defense Objective No. 6 To raise awareness of society about the importance of the national defense system and to strengthen its reputation among the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia.	Does not directly support nat. interests	N/A

Figure 16. R1 and the Slovenia's Defense Objectives, Modified

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, *Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2013), 4-6, modified by author.

Second, by achieving Slovenia's defense objectives and thus supporting its interests in the area of defense, the SAF achieves its overall mission as assigned by the Defense Strategy: "through military capabilities promote and implement national interests and security objectives".¹²¹

Third, the *Long-term Development and Equipping* reiterates the defense objectives 1 and 2 with the first two prescribed missions and subsequent tasks for the SAF depicted in figure 18.

¹²¹ Republic of Slovenia, *Defense Strategy*, 34.

In addition:

1. The third mission directs the SAF to participate in the system of protection against natural and other disasters with a subsequent task of providing dual-use capabilities. The R1 does not have organic specialized dual-use equipment that could be used during protection, rescue and relief operations. However, it can provide work force, which is most often required from the SAF in times of natural and other disasters. In addition, some minor transport, engineer, surveillance, reconnaissance (UAS) and medical assistance can be provided.
2. The fourth mission directs the SAF to support other national bodies and organizations in the provision of security with one of the subsequent tasks of evacuating Slovenian citizens from abroad during crisis. The mission does not directly apply to R1, because it has to be carried out primarily by the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff. Again, if necessary, the R1 can provide military expertise and troops for an evacuation. However, the unit will not be trained or equipped to conduct such operations.

1 st mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces		R1
To provide defense capacity and to carry out military defense of the Republic of Slovenia.	Linked with def. object. 1, 2 and 3	YES
Tasks deriving from the 1 st mission		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To establish planned capabilities of the Slovenian Armed Forces and to sustain an appropriate level of their readiness.To carry out national military defense.To fulfil international commitments under Article 5.	Linked with def. object. 1, 2 and 3	YES
2 nd mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces		
To contribute to international peace, security and stability.	Linked with def. object. 4 and 5	YES
Tasks deriving from the 2 nd mission		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To strengthen cooperation between SAF and AlliesParticipation in international operations and missions.	Linked with def. object. 4 and 5	YES
3 rd mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces		
To participate in the system of protection against natural and other disasters.	WITH LIMITATIONS	
Task deriving from the 3 rd mission		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To provide dual-use capabilities and to participate in protection, rescue and relief operations during natural and other disasters	WITH LIMITATIONS	
4 th mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces		
To support other national bodies and organizations in the provision of security.	NOT APPLICABLE	
Task deriving from the 4 th mission		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To support other national bodies and organizations.To evacuate citizens of the Republic of Slovenia from abroad.	NOT APPLICABLE	

Figure 17. R1 and Missions and Main Tasks of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Modified

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, *Resolution on the General-Long-Term Development and Equipping Programme of the Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025* (Ljubljana, Slovenia: MORS, 2011), 8-9, modified by author.

Fourth, evaluation of R1 through the lens of the standing military doctrine. The mission prescribed by the *Military Doctrine* is the same as the one prescribed by other strategic documents and has been addressed above. In addition to achieving the mission, R1 has to be able to carry out mission essential tasks. To maintain operational readiness

through training, activation and mobilization of forces as well as deployment of forces is the General Staff's responsibility. The R1 is capable of conducting defensive operations and is limited in execution of offensive operations because of lack of firepower and protection. Lastly, sustainment will have to be addressed at the level of the armed forces and within the logistics community.

Fifth, with infantry, engineer, sniper, mortar, UAS, sustainment, medical and air defense elements, R1 satisfies the combined arms requirement.

Sixth, the resources available at this time do not support a transformation of the SAF based on the provisions of the national strategic documents. The most important decision that must be made is whether the company will be organized as a light or motorized infantry unit. Comparison of a light infantry and motorized infantry organization:

1. Mobility. The greatest disadvantage of a light infantry organization is that, with its limited transportation assets, it will always be dependent on other organizations for an insertion into an area of operations and to conduct longer movements.
2. Firepower. The 6x6 and 8x8 vehicles are equipped with either a 12.7 mm heavy machine gun or 40 mm automatic grenade launcher. Approximately 20 vehicles would be required to transport the company and that would significantly increase its firepower. On the other hand, neither type of vehicle is suitable for most Slovenian terrain, which is restricted and severely restricted. In addition, the 6x6 Valuk is approaching the end of its life cycle.

3. Protection. The 6x6 Valuk only offers protection against small arms fire up to 7.62 mm caliber weapons. The 8x8 Svarun, with additional armor, can protect the crew from up to 30 mm armor piercing rounds. Therefore, vehicles significantly increase the protection level of the unit.
4. All SAF deployments in support of stability operations are conducted using vehicles. Therefore, to conduct operations abroad, a unit has to be equipped with vehicles. That does not necessarily mean that all SAF companies need vehicles but that a set of vehicles has to be maintained and assigned only to units deploying and units preparing to deploy.
5. A logistics footprint with a very limited number of vehicles is smaller, favoring independent light infantry operations in restricted and severely restricted terrain.

There are two main reasons that favor light infantry organization over a motorized one. First, there are only 79 6x6 Valuk vehicles and 30 8x8 Svarun vehicles in SAF.¹²² With a minimum requirement of about 20 vehicles per company, SAF could only equip about five companies. Second, the R1 organization already includes 170 personnel. If vehicles are added with a driver and a gunner, that number increases to at least 210 personnel. Even 170 personnel is difficult to manage and some modifications to R1 will be made in the following section to mitigate that; however, 210 or more personnel exceeds span of control for the company leadership.

¹²² Branislav Kocijan, “Organizacija in delovanje parka bojnih vojaških vozil SV (Organization and Functioning of the Motorpool of Combat Vehicles of the Slovenian Armed Forces),” (Maribor, Slovenia: Slovenian Armed Forces. Military Schools Centre, 2013), 22.

Other notable resource requirements are antitank weapons systems, unmanned aerial systems and engineering equipment. However, those present a fraction of a cost that procurement of vehicles would cost.

R2: Informed Position

R2 is a derivative of R1 evaluated in accordance with the Research Model presented in chapter 3. The first major concern about the R2 is whether it is going to be light or motorized infantry organization. Based on the previous section, R2 will be based upon light infantry organization. The second concern comes from a span of command and control. An effective commander can exercise control over a maximum of six independent elements. With the R1, the commander would have to exercise command and control over ten subordinate elements: three infantry platoons, weapons platoon, mortar section, medical team, UAS team, sustainment squad, sniper team and a combat engineers squad in addition to a small company headquarters element. In order to allow a commander to exercise effective command and control, engineers, snipers, UAS team and mortar elements have been combined into a combat support platoon while the medical team has been incorporated into the sustainment section. With such design, the executive officer can focus on logistics and headquarters element, first sergeant on direct fire employment and company commander on maneuver elements.

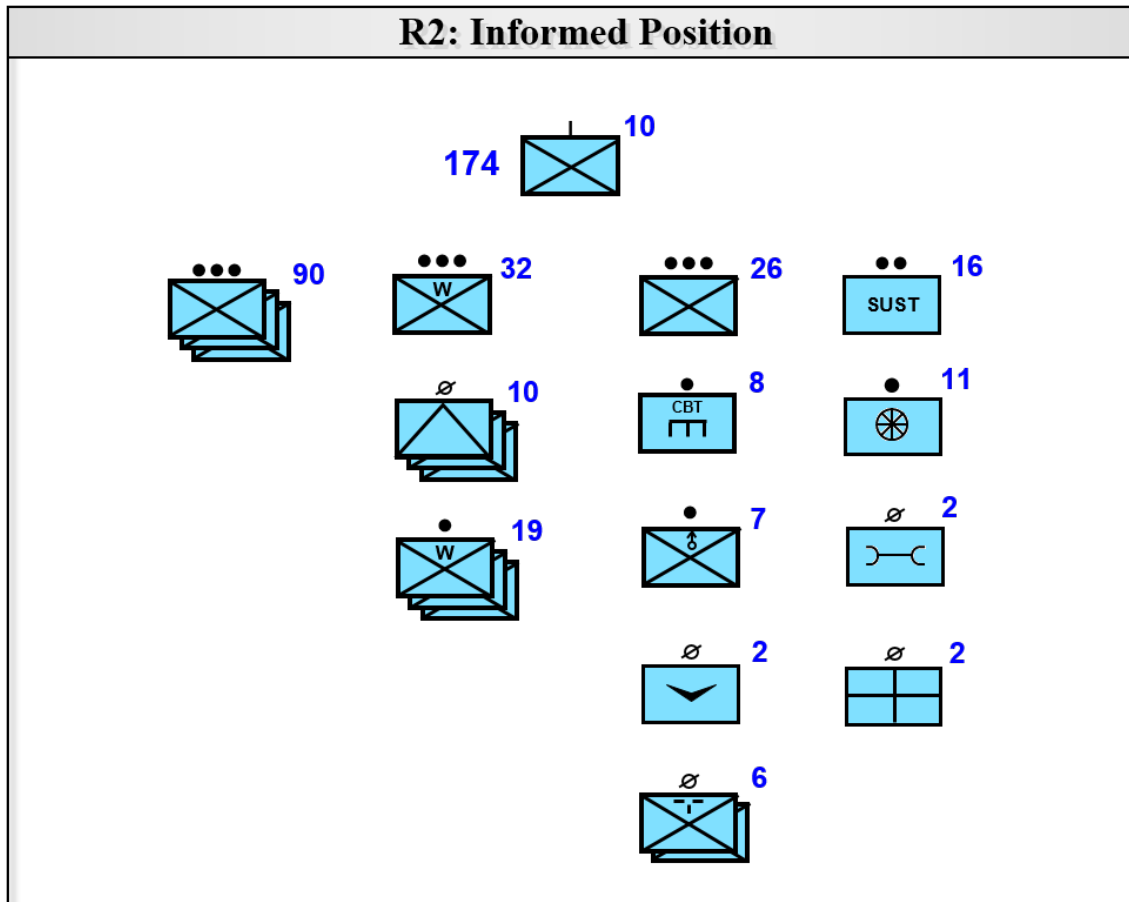


Figure 18. R2: Informed Position

Source: Created by author.

Chapter Summary and Conclusions

At first sight, there is no significant difference between the R1 and R2. However, through the analysis, the author determined that the R2 needs to be based on light infantry. The main reason is the limited number of armored personnel carrier vehicles available in SAF, with about 80 6x6 Valuk and only 30 8x8 Svarun. With the current defense budget, Slovenia will not procure new combat vehicles for at least another five years. In addition, if equipped with vehicles, the size of the basic combat unit would rise

to about 210 personnel, which is beyond company commander's ability to conduct sound command and control. Therefore, for operations in Slovenia, companies will be organized as light infantry, for operations abroad, such as crisis response and peace support operations, they will be issued 6x6 vehicles. Also, units dedicated to EU and NATO response forces will be equipped with 6x6 vehicles. The main organizational change between the R1 and R2 is the consolidation of combat support elements into a combat support platoon. That decreases number of elements the commander has to control from ten to five.

Through the analysis, the author has established that the SAF with a company as the basic combat unit can achieve national defense objectives that support national interests. Furthermore, it can successfully accomplish the SAF's basic mission prescribed by the *Military Doctrine*. However, the company needs to be supported by higher echelons' indirect fire, with close quarter attack aviation if possible and has to be provided strategic transport.

Currently, the SAF does not have resources available to form proposed R2. Still, the investment in modern antitank weapon systems, air defense manpads, small UAS, and engineering equipment is a small cost compared to the value of security. In the future, organization of the armed forces should be based on a 8x8 armored personnel carrier and with that, the design of the basic combat unit will change. However, before procurement of new combat vehicles the issue of outdated and unaligned doctrine needs to be addressed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

R3: Recommended Solution

To determine R3, the author evaluated the R2 through the lens of the Chief Decision Maker and the stakeholders. The CDM is the Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces and the stakeholders are the brigade commanders and to a smaller extent regimental commanders. When considered by the CDM, the design of the proposed basic combat unit (R2) achieves its purpose; however, the main areas of concern are the unit's lack of firepower and protection. In addition, the implementation of the concept presents a challenge. The following considerations are the primary obstacles to implementing proposed basic combat unit organization:

1. With a company as a basic combat unit, the focus of the armed forces is no longer on a brigade or regimental level. This may result in dissatisfaction among regimental and brigade commanders.
2. Administrative challenges. The SAF is a highly bureaucratized organization integrated into the Public Administration apparatus. All changes on individual employee level have to be implemented in accordance with complex rules and legislature.
3. Significant changes in military doctrine. This issue has been addressed throughout the research.
4. Plans for the procurement of new equipment.
5. Natural resistance to change in larger organizations.

With the development of a (mechanized) battalion battle group as a core capability of the armed forces stalled by the recession, the SAF needs to focus on more realistic goals, that will significantly improve its ability to carry out its assigned tasks in the near term. The CDM and the stakeholders should consider the proposed solution as the core capability of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

The issue of inadequate firepower cannot be solved at a company level. Even now, infantry regiments do not organically possess indirect fire capability. They only gain a TN-90 155 mm Howitzer battery upon formation of a battalion battle group. To mitigate the lack of firepower, companies always need to be supported by brigade artillery assets or, when conducting operations abroad, by Allies' indirect fire assets.

The issue of protection has been addressed in chapter 4. For defensive operations, companies will have to take advantage the terrain offers. For operations abroad, a caveat has to be communicated to the Allies, that until the SAF procures (armored) equipment with adequate protection, Slovenian units will only conduct limited offensive operations.

One of the biggest concerns on the strategic level is Slovenia's commitment to NATO and the EU. Traditionally, countries contribute a battalion-level unit or higher to NATO pool of forces, with an exemption of special forces organizations. Currently, Slovenia is contributing a Motorized Battalion Battle Group to NATO's pool of forces. A company as a basic combat unit can still meet NATO requirements. Rotations of units assigned to NATO's pool of forces should be determined at least two years in advance. In accordance with current training plans, each unit has about a six-month training period available to reach their final operating capabilities. During that time, administrative regimental HQ should be reorganized into a battalion battle group operational HQs and

trained in accordance with the mission essential tasks list. To compensate for a potential lack of specialized staff, members of the brigade staff should augment the headquarters. The equipped and trained combat-ready regimental HQ with three to five assigned companies would then be available for NATO and EU missions.

After evaluation of the R2 through the lens of the CDM and the stakeholders, R3's design remains the same as the R2's. However, its implementation is controversial because it alters the core of the armed forces and it forces the organization to make major changes in its design and function. Implementation also requires significant analysis and professional debate on how it affects necessary changes across the DOTMLPF-P spectrum.

Recommendations for the Chief Decision Maker

The following near-term (one to two years) recommendations are a direct result of the author's experience in the Slovenian Armed Forces, education in the Professional Military Education system of the U.S. Army, professional body of knowledge that exists on the Slovenian Armed Forces, extensive literature review and the analysis of that literature thought the means of the developed Research Model.

The SAF should conduct a comprehensive analysis of all Slovenian strategic documents reviewed in chapter 2 and present their conclusion to the Ministry of Defense and to the Government. Any misunderstandings should be clarified. Upon that analysis, a working group should be established with a general timeline on creating a plan on how the Slovenian military doctrine is to be developed. The U.S. Army approach with Doctrine 2015 provides a good example; however, it is only partially applicable to the SAF.

The SAF should readdress how it plans to defend Slovenia. For the third year in a row, it was reported to the President of Slovenia, that the SAF is not capable of carrying out its assigned combat tasks. At least two of the major issues are the current regimental force structure and extreme lack of resources. Some argue that membership in NATO and the EU is a guarantee for a provision of national security. That is only partially true. Every nation is primarily responsible to provide for its own national defense. Only a transformation into a more agile and flexible force can improve SAF's capabilities to defend Slovenia.

The SAF should readdress the issue of classification of its military documents, publications and literature. With membership in NATO and the EU a need for transparency is greater than ever before. In addition, availability of a wide range of military documents, publications and literature is essential for conduct of any serious research that adds to development of expertise and enhances the professional body of knowledge.

Members of the SAF, especially decision makers need to understand that the organization of the armed forces and functioning of the institution cannot be simply copied from elsewhere. Those concepts need to be developed with special considerations given to Slovenia's unique society, history, geographic position and required capabilities. For that reason, professional military education is extremely important and more emphasis should be emphasized more.

Transformation of the SAF is absolutely necessary and should be planned in the near-term with a conclusion in the long-term planning period (three to five years). Planners should take a deep look into the events that led to the last major unsuccessful

transformation, the conduct of the transformation and why it was stopped years before its completion. A transformation should not only include a basic redesign of the tactical formation, but an effort to develop capabilities that can carry out tasks set forth by the national strategic documents. Transformation must occur across the entire DOTMLPF-P spectrum and across all three levels of warfare (strategic, operational and tactical) in order to be successful. One of the major factors of the future transformation is a vehicle platform it will be based on. Now, with the budget slowly recovering, a professional discussion on the topic should be initiated along a reassessment of the need to establish a (mechanized) infantry battalion battle group.

The author does not accept the reasoning that the development of a single (mechanized) infantry battalion battle group will close the capability gap and recommends the CDM and the stakeholders base the upcoming transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces on the proposed solution as prescribed by this research.

Recommendations for Further Study

First, one of the areas the author did not research is the R3's command and control relationships within the SAF and within international organizations. If regimental headquarters will only serve as an administrative entity, a command relationship between R3 and other organizations within the SAF must be addressed. A follow-on study should research and develop in detail the process of transition of administrative regimental HQ into a battalion battle group HQ. In addition, that study should also focus on the command relationships of the battalion battle group while operating abroad, keeping in mind that Slovenians unit will heavily depend on Allies for strategic airlift, firepower and potentially protection.

Second, basic design of Slovenian military doctrine (literature) needs to be addressed. A severe gap in doctrinal publications exists. The main reasons are: absence of a comprehensive approach to military literature development, lack of individual and institutional interest in the field, excessive copying of foreign literature and poor understanding of the importance of professional and applicable literature in the functioning and development of the armed forces. The Army Doctrine 2015 offers a great starting point on the hierarchy and structure of doctrinal publications; not to copy, but to analyze and infer possible solutions.

Finally, the issue of how the SAF carries out its primary task of defending Slovenia should be addressed. A membership in international organizations, a recession or lack of resources and a perceived low threat environment are not good enough reasons to give up on efforts to defend Slovenia's sovereign territory.

Personal Learning Reflections

By conducting the research, the author has made significant progress in his understanding of the last major U.S. Army transformation, the concepts of transformation, modularity, and combined arms as well as the Slovenian strategic documents and military doctrine. He has learned that the doctrinal foundation on which the Slovenian Armed Forces are built on is outdated and only partially applicable today. Even if the *Annual Reports on the Readiness of the SAF* to the President were not published, the author would conclude from his research, that Slovenia is far from being capable of defending its sovereign territory. Identified capability gap, publicly affirmed for the third year in a row, should be of urgent concern to many, especially the officer

corps of the SAF. As a member of that officer corps, the author feels personally obliged to assist in closure of the aforementioned capability gap.

With the research, the author has contributed a small piece to the effort of bridging the gap between tactical and strategic levels of war. A light infantry company, as the basic combat unit of the SAF, has direct effect on both.

Finally, the author has gained a deep appreciation for a conduct of professional research, research methodologies, force management, and reinforced his passion for writing and a life-long education.

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